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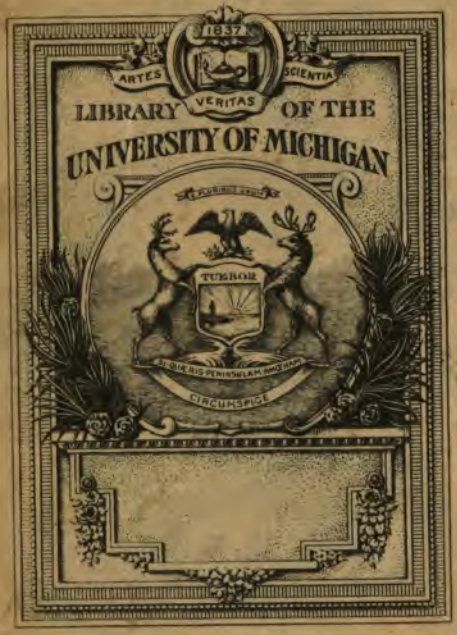
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THE

EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE

OF

SIR RICHARD STEELE;

INCLUDING

HIS FAMILIAR LETTERS

TO HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTERS;

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

FRAGMENTS OF THREE PLAYS;

TWO OF THEM UNDOUBTEDLY STEELE'S,
THE THIRD SUPPOSED TO BE ADDISON'S.

FAITHFULLY PRINTED FROM THE ORIGINALS;

AND ILLUSTRATED WITH

LITERARY AND HISTORICAL ANECDOTES,

BY JOHN NICHOLS, F. S. A. E. & P.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

Letters		Page
264, 265.	To Mrs. Steele	337
266.	To General Stanhope	338
267.	To Mr. Congreve	341
268—270.	To Mrs. Steele	344, 345
271.	To the Countess of Burlington	345
272.	To Mrs. Bovey	347
273—280.	To Mrs. Steele	351—358
281.	From Mr. Meredith	358
282.	To Mr. Meredith	360
283.	From Mr. Meredith	361
284.	To Mr. Meredith	362
285.	To William Honeycomb, esq.	363
286—289.	To Mrs. Steele	366—368
290.	To Mr. Walpole	369
291.	Address to the King, from the Lord Lieutenant and Deputy Lieutenants of Middlesex and Westminster	376
292.	To the Earl of Clare	379
293—294.	To Lady Steele	382—384
295.	Address to the King, from Boroughbridge	385
296.	To Sir Samuel Garth	387
297.	Steele's Preface to the Drummer	390
298.	To Mr. Hughes	393
299—301.	To Lady Steele	393—395

Letters		Page
302.	Preface to the Englishman, vol. II.	395
303—318.	To Lady Steele	398—409
319.	From the Editor of a Lady's Travels into Spain	410
320—415.	To Lady Steele	412—499
416.	From Mrs. Manley	500
417.	To Lady Steele	504
418.	To Mr. Alexander Scurlock	505
419.	To Bishop Hoadly	506
420.	To Sir John Ward, Lord Mayor	509
421, 422.	To Miss Steele	512
423.	From Captain Rogers	513
424.	To Mr. Alexander Scurlock	516
425.	To Miss Steele	517
426.	From Mr. Cutteford	518
427.	To Mr. Law	520
428.	To Miss Steele	522
429.	From Mr. Dennis	523
430.	From Mr. Cibber	532
431.	To the Earl of Oxford	540
432.	To the Duke of Newcastle	544
433.	To Lord Chancellor Parker	552
434.	To the Duke of Argyle	554
435.	To Mr. Craggs	555
436.	To Earl Stanhope	556
437.	From Mr. Dennis	558
438.	From a Lady	566
439.	To Miss Steele	569
440.	Steele's Journey to Edinburgh	570
441.	To Miss Steele	572
442.	To Mr. Brookesby	573
443.	To Mr. Gilmore	574
444.	Memoranda by Steele, &c.	575
445, 446.	To Miss Steele	577, 578
447.	Steele's Diary, and Letter to Mr. Pelham	579
448—451.	To Miss Steele	582—584
452.	To ———	584
453, 454.	To Mr. Alexander Scurlock	585, 586
455.	Steele's Diary continued	586
456.	To Mr. Wilks	587
		457.

Letters		Page
457.	To Mr. Cibber	588
458.	To Mr. Booth	589
459.	Nett Profits of the Theatre, in 1721	590
460.	To Mr. Castelman	590
461.	To Miss Steele and Miss Molly Steele	591
462.	To Miss Steele	591
463.	To Mr. Gilmore	592
464.	To Mr. Alexander Scurlock	593
465.	Statement of Playhouse Accompts	594
466.	Certificate for Francis Carteret	595
467.	From Mr. J. R.	595
438.	To Mr. Congreve	598
469.	To King George the First	619
470.	Preface to the Conscious Lovers	621
471.	From Mr. Highmore	624
472.	A Cash Account of Sir Richard Steele's	627
473—475.	To Miss Steele	627—629
476.	To Mrs. Ceney	629
477—483.	To Miss Steele	630—633
484.	Playhouse Account, for 1723, and 1724,	634
485, 486.	To Miss Steele	635
487.	To Sir Robert Walpole	636
488.	Sir Richard Steele's Proposals to Mr. Barker	636
489.	To Mr. Morgan	638
490.	From Mr. Morgan	639
491.	From Messrs. Wilks, Booth, and Cibber	640
492.	From Mr. Morgan	643
493.	To Mr. Morgan	645
494.	To Miss Molly Steele	646
495.	From Mr. Plaxton	646
496.	To Miss Steele	648
497.	From Mr. Asplin	649
498.	To Miss Mary Steele	650
499—502.	Mr. Meyricke to Miss Steele	651—658
503.	Mr. Harcourt to Miss Steele	659
504.	Miss Steele to Mr. Trevor	661
505.	Mr. Meyricke to Miss Steele	664
506.	Miss Steele to Mr. Meyricke	665
507.	Mr. Trevor to Miss Steele	666

Letters		Page
508.	Mr. Meyricke to Mrs. Lloyd	669
509.	Mr. Philips to Miss Steele	671
510.	Mr. Trevor to his Wife	672
511.	Mrs. Aynston to Miss Tonson	673
512.	Poetical Epistle by Mrs. Aynston	674
513.	Character of Sir Richard Steele by Mr. Newcomb	675
514.	An Essay, sacred to Steele's Memory	677
515.	Dr. Rundle's Anticipation of the posthumous Character of Sir Richard Steele	685
516.	To Mr. M. Davies	691
517, 518.	To Lady Steele	692, 693
519.	To Mr. Alexander Scurlock	693
520.	Proposal for the Payment of Sir Richard Steele's Debts	694

SIR RICHARD STEELE'S

EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE.

264. TO MRS. STEELE.

BLOOMSBURY-SQUARE, MAY 28, 1714.

DEAR PRUE,

I WILL come to you as soon as possibly I can. I hope you will like the lampreys which I left at home. I am going to the Hanover Club; but must be back at the press * before half-hour after seven.

Your most obedient husband, RICH. STEELE.

265. TO MRS. STEELE.

TONSON'S, BOW-STREET,

DEAR PRUE, JUNE 2, 1714.

I STAY here to attend this thing * close, or it will not be ready; for I am forced to make alterations according to new intelligence about the Bill.

When I have done, I will come to you.

Yours ever, RICH. STEELE.

* The second edition of "A Letter to a Member of Parliament, concerning the Bill for preventing the Growth of Schism, by Richard Steele, esq." was published June 5, 1714.

266. TO GENERAL STANHOPE *.

SIR, [1714.]

THERE could not be a more proper patron to the ENGLISHMAN † than He who, in the esteem of all men, is as much one, as any who enjoys the honour and happiness of that name. If plain-dealing, generosity, and truth, have distinguished us from the base and wily arts of our Enemies, these

* James Stanhope, grandson to the first Earl of Chesterfield by his second lady, having served when very young as a volunteer under the Duke of Savoy, was made a Captain in the Foot-guards, with the rank of Lieutenant-colonel, in 1694; was a member of the House of Commons from 1700 till created a peer; served a volunteer in 1702 in the expedition to Cadiz, and next year in Portugal; was made a Brigadier-general in 1704; Envoy Extraordinary to Charles III. in 1706; Major-general in 1707; and Commander in Chief of the forces in Spain, 1708. The same year he subdued Minorca; and in 1710 commanded the English forces at the battles of Almanza and Saragossa; to which victories he greatly contributed, and facilitated the march of Charles III. to Madrid. He was constituted first Commissioner of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, April 11, 1717; created Viscount Stanhope of Mahon, July 21; Secretary of State, March 21, 1717-18; Earl Stanhope, April 9, 1718; and was sent the same year to France and Spain, to conclude the negotiations for a general peace; was one of the Lords Justices in 1719; was twice in France, where he brought the King of Spain to accede to the Quadruple Alliance; and on his return was again one of the Lords Justices. He was suddenly seized with a dizziness in his head, occasioned by the vehemence of a debate in the House of Peers, Feb 4, 1720-1; and died next day.

† This was prefixed to the first volume of "The Englishman."

qualities

qualities Mr. Stanhope possesses in common with all true Englishmen. But those endowments and acquisitions which make him capable of exerting the noble dispositions peculiar to free and generous Britons, are what render him one of the greatest men of the greatest people.

A natural and prevailing eloquence in assemblies, an heroic and inspiring courage in the field, a gentle and winning behaviour in conversation, are eminences which enable you to be a blessing to the age in which you live. You have ever used these advantages for the service of your Country, with a beautiful disregard to what is usually thought a man's greatest interest. All men of sense give you, in their real sentiments and just conceptions of your merit, much greater honours than could be purchased from the gaudy affluence of such things as are the admiration and first pursuit of common men.

Many circumstances render it inconvenient to say much of the present I now make you: but, if I had, instead of forming the character of an Englishman from my own conceptions, drawn it from the gentleman to whom I am now speaking, it had been much easier to have defended it. I do not by this application design to involve you in a dispute in favour of these writings. You undertook it, with great humanity, when it was most useful to me, and I cannot but do those who have condemned them the justice to mention to the world this strong circumstance against these papers, that your eloquence has been ineffectual in their defence. However, no one can blame me for being proud that so good and great a man condescended, in places

wherein they have been censured, to be my advocate *.

Your Queen and Country have your great qualifications in store for their glory and service, whenever you are called to their assistance in the Field, the Cabinet, or the Senate. In the talents of each place, you have few equals in ability, even among those who are practised only in one of them, and much fewer in a disinterested integrity in exerting that ability †. Your generous conduct with relation to the fortunes as well as the lives of your enemies, over whom you have had the right of conquest, has gained you the most eligible fame, that of justice and moderation. This generous conduct has made every man you ever commanded love you as a comrade, and every fellow-subject you have served (and you have served every fellow-subject) esteem you as a friend. The world, which is in arrear to your virtue, never speaks of you without wishing you honour in proportion to what you have done for your Country's glory; and wishing you wealth in proportion to what you have refused, to augment that glory.

I am, Sir, with the greatest gratitude and respect,
Your most obliged and most humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

* In the House of Commons, on the question for his expulsion, "Mr. Steele chose to make his appearance near the bar of the House; and I will not forget to mention one circumstance in this scene that very much sweetened his affliction, which was, that he had the honour to stand between Mr. Stanhope and Mr. Walpole, who had condescended to take upon them the parts of his advocates." *Apology*, p. 234.

† One might suppose that Lord Moira had sitten for this picture.

267. TO MR. CONGREVE.

SIR, [1714.]

MY name, as Publisher of the following Miscellanies *, I am sensible, is but a slight recommendation of them to the Publick; but the Town's opinion of them will be raised, when it sees them addressed to Mr. Congreve †. If the Patron is but known to have a taste for what is presented to him, it gives an hopeful idea of the work; how much more, when he is an acknowledged master of the art he is desired to favour! Your just success in the various parts of Poetry, will make your appro-

* This was prefixed to Steele's Collection of "Poetical Miscellanies."

† Mr. William Congreve was born in Staffordshire in 1672. His father being a steward in the Burlington family, he was bred in Ireland. Soon after the Revolution, he was entered of the Middle Temple; but, the Law proving too severe a study for his inclination, he early distinguished himself as a dramatic writer. His first comedy, "The Old Bachelor," came out in 1693; and that munificent patron of wit, the Earl of Halifax, soon after made him a Commissioner of the Hackney-coaches, gave him a place in the Pipe-office, and another in the Customs, worth 600*l.* a-year. He continued writing with success till 1698, when he seems to have quitted the stage in disgust. Under the ministry of the Earl of Oxford, he was continued in office, though almost blind, through the friendship of Dr. Swift; and the latter years of his life were spent in ease and retirement. He became at last quite blind; and, dying Jan. 19, 1728-9, was buried with great pomp in Westminster-abbey, where an elegant monument was erected to his memory at the expence of Henrietta Duchess of Marlborough, to whom he bequeathed the greater part of his fortune.

bation

bation of the following sheets a favour to many ingenious gentlemen, whose modesty wants the sanction of such an authority. Men of your talents oblige the world, when they are studious to produce in others the similitude of their excellencies. Your great discerning in distinguishing the characters of mankind, which is manifested in your Comedies, renders your good opinion a just foundation for the esteem of other men. I know, indeed, no argument against these Collections, in comparison of any other Tonson has heretofore printed, but that there are in it no verses of yours. That gentle, free, and easy faculty, which also in Songs, and short Poems *, you possess above all others, distinguishes itself wherever it appears. I cannot but instance your inimitable "Doris," which excels, for politeness, fine raillery, and courtly satire, any thing we can meet with in any language.

Give me leave to tell you, that when I consider your capacity this way, I cannot enough applaud the goodness of your mind, that has given so few examples of these severities, under the temptation of so great applause as the ill-natured world bestows on them, though addressed without any mixture of your delicacy.

I cannot leave my favourite "Doris" without taking notice how much that short performance discovers a true knowledge of life. "Doris" is the character of a libertine woman of condition, and the satire is worked up accordingly; for people of quality are seldom touched with any representation of

* Dr. Johnson was of a different opinion. "The petty poems of Congreve," he says, "are seldom worth the cost of criticism."

their

their vices but in a light which makes them ridiculous.

As much as I esteem you for your excellent writings, by which you are an honour to our Nation, I chuse rather, as one that has passed many happy hours with you, to celebrate that easy condescension of mind, and command of a pleasant imagination, which give you the uncommon praise of a man of wit, always to please, and never to offend. No one, after a joyful evening, can reflect upon an expression of Mr. Congreve's that dwells upon him with pain.

In a man capable of exerting himself any way, this (whatever the vain and ill-natured may think of the matter) is an excellence above the brightest sallies of imagination.

The reflection upon this most equal, amiable, and correct behaviour, which can be observed only by your intimate acquaintance, has quite diverted me from acknowledging your several excellencies as a writer; but to dwell particularly on those subjects would have no very good effect upon the following performances of myself and friends. Thus, I confess to you, your modesty is spared only by my vanity; and I hope you will give me leave to indulge it yet further, in telling all the world I am, with great truth, Sir,

Your most obedient,
and most humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

268. TO

268. TO MRS. STEELE.

BLOOMSBURY-SQUARE,

DEAR PRUE, JUNE 24, 1714.

LORD WHARTON, whom I met at the House, engaged me at the Kit-cat at three o'clock; so that, had I come home, I should have had time but just to come back again.

I will wait on you after six.

Yours, most obediently, RICH. STEELE.

---

269. TO MRS. STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JULY 8, 1714.

AFTER having settled with Tryon to pay Tishmaker, I am attending other business, and wait Mr. Walpole's motions.

I will be at home at seven o'clock.

Yours, RICH. STEELE.

270. TO MRS. STEELE.

CHARING-CROSS,

DEAR PRUE, JULY 15, 1714.

MR. WALPOLE going out of town to-morrow, I am obliged to dine where he does, to get an opportunity of speaking to him. I am, dear Prue,

Your most affectionate, obedient husband,

RICH. STEELE.

---

271. TO THE COUNTESS OF BURLINGTON *.

MADAM, JULY 21, 1714.

I HUMBLY desire your Ladyship would forgive the presumption I am now guilty of in presenting you with this book †. I do it from the high honour and veneration I have for your great merit and virtue. It cannot, I know, furnish your Ladyship with new reflections; and the Ladies of whom you are the happy mother have an example before them

* Juliana, daughter and sole heiress to Henry Noel, second son of Edward Viscount Campden. She was married to Charles the second Earl of Burlington, who left her a widow in 1703-4; and was mother to Richard the third and last Earl of Burlington.

† This letter was prefixed to the first volume of "The Ladies Library."

more

more prevalent to form them to every thing praiseworthy than any precepts they can find in the works of the best writers. But, as there is much curiosity in these papers, and great strength and force in the reasonings of them; give me leave to offer this Collection for the use of female life, as a testimony of the respect which I, with all who are honoured with the least acquaintance with you, must pay to your Ladyship, for the eminent example you have given the world in the important characters of a Wife and a Mother *.

To command with the mien of making a request, to oblige with the aspect of receiving favours, and to win affection without other design than making all people happy who converse with her, or depend upon her, are excellencies peculiar to my Lady Burlington. But, as there is a complaisance which, like sincere friendship, speaks our good opinion in our ordinary looks and actions, more than any language can do it, I here shall go no farther than just to declare myself, with great deference, among the admirers of your great goodness and virtue; and beg of your Ladyship to forgive my saying thus

* "Just published, a Book (formerly so often mentioned in the Spectator) intituled, *The Ladies Library;* written by a Lady; published by Mr. Steele; consisting of general Rules for Conduct in all Circumstances of the Life of Woman." Post-Boy, Nov. 9, 1714.

"Whereas there has been a Book lately published, under the title of *The Ladies Library:* This is to inform the publick, that it is an imposition on them, and a notorious injustice to the lawful proprietors; on which occasion, This day is published, *Mr. Steele detected;* or the Poor and oppressed Orphan's Letters to the great Mr. Steele, &c." Ibid. Nov. 11.

much,

much, for the forbearance of saying more, on a subject of which I am so very fond, as that of expressing myself, Madam,

Your Ladyship's most devoted,
most obedient, and most humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

272. TO MRS. BOVEY *.

MADAM, JULY 21, 1714.

IT is an undisputed privilege writers are possessed of, to produce examples to the precepts

* On a splendid monument in Westminster-abbey, under that of Lord Viscount Howe, and next to Bp. Pearce, is a bust of this Lady, on a small medallion, placed between two large emblematic figures, designed by Gibbs, and thus inscribed:

"To the memory of Mrs. KATHARINA BOVEY, whose person and understanding would have become the highest rank in female life, and whose vivacity would have recommended her in the best conversation; but, by judgment, as well as inclination, she chose such a retirement as gave her great opportunities for reading and reflection, which she made use of to the wisest purposes of improvement in knowledge and religion. Upon other subjects, she ventured far out of the common way of thinking; but in religious matters, she made the Holy Scriptures, in which she was well skilled, the rule and guide of her faith and actions; esteeming it more safe to rely upon the plain Word of God, than to run into any freedoms of thought upon revealed truths. The great share of time allowed to the closet was not perceived in her œconomy; for she had always a well-ordered and well-instructed family, from the happy influence as well of her temper and

they would enforce from the living characters of their contemporaries. You cannot, therefore, expect for ever to be doing laudable things, and for ever to escape applause*. It is in vain, you find, that you have always concealed greater excellencies than others industriously present to view; for the world will know that your beauty, though in the highest degree of dignity and sweetness, is

and conduct, as of her uniform and exemplary Christian life. It pleased God to bless her with a considerable estate, which, with a liberal hand, guided by wisdom and piety, she employed to his glory, and the good of her neighbours. Her domestic expences were managed with a decency and dignity suitable to her fortune; but with a frugality that made her income abound to all proper objects of charity, to the relief of the necessitous, the encouragement of the industrious, and the instruction of the ignorant. She distributed not only with chearfulness, but with joy; which, upon some occasions of raising and refreshing the spirit of the afflicted, she could not refrain from breaking forth into tears, flowing from a heart thoroughly affected with compassion and benevolence. Thus did many of her good works, while she lived, go up as a memorial before God; and some she left to follow her.

"She died January 21, 1726, in the 57th year of her age, at Flaxley, her seat in Gloucestershire; and was buried there, where her name will be long remembered, and where several of her benefactions at that place, as well as others, are more particularly recorded."

At the top of the monument are the family arms; and at the bottom these lines:

"This monument was erected with the utmost respect to her memory, and justice to her character, by her executrix, Mrs. MARY POPE, who lived with her near forty years in perfect friendship, and never once interrupted till her much lamented death."

* This letter was prefixed to the second volume of "The Ladies Library."

but

but a faint image of the spirit which inhabits the amiable form which Heaven has bestowed on you. It is observed, by all who know you, that, though you have an aspect and mien which draw the attention and expectation of all who converse with you, and a wit and good sense which surmount the great conceptions your person raises in your beholders, those perfections are enjoyed by you like gifts of common acceptation; that lovely and affable air expresses only the humility of a great and generous heart; and the most shining accomplishments, used by others to attract vulgar admiration, are serviceable to you only as they adorn piety and charity.

Though your person and fortune equally raise the admiration and ambition of our whole sex to move your attention to their importunities, your equal spirit entertains itself with ideas of a very different kind, and is solicitous to search for imperfections where it were the utmost injustice for any other to imagine any, and applauses only awaken you to an inquisition for errors.

It is with this turn of mind that, instead of assemblies and conversations, books and solitude have been your choice, and you have gone on in the study of what you should be, rather than attended to the celebration of what you are. Thus, with the charms of the fairest of your own sex, and knowledge not inferior to the more learned of ours, a closet, a bower, or some beauteous scene of rural nature, has constantly robbed the world of a Lady's appearance, who never was beheld but with gladness to her visitants, nor ever admired but with pain to herself.

But

But a constant distribution of large charities, a search for objects of new bounty, and a skilful choice of modest merit, or suffering virtue, touch the souls of those who partake your goodness too deeply to be borne without enquiring for, and celebrating their benefactress. I should be loth to offend your tenderness in this particular; but I know, when I say this, the fatherless and the widow, the neglected man of merit, the wretch on the sick bed, in a word, the distressed under all forms, will from this hint learn to trace the kind hand which has so often, as from Heaven, conveyed to them what they have asked in the anguish of soul, when none could hear, but He who has blessed you with so ample a fortune, and given you a soul to employ it in his service.

If much more than what is here intimated be not the plain truth, it is impossible to come at what is so, since one can find none who speak of you, who are not in love with your person, or indebted to your fortune. I wish you, as the completion of human happiness, a long continuance of being what you are; and am, Madam,

Your most obedient
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

273. TO

273. TO MRS. STEELE.

MADAM, JULY 21, 1714.

IF great obligations received are just motives for addresses of this kind *, you have an unquestionable pretension to my acknowledgments, who have condescended to give me your very self. I can make no return for so inestimable a favour, but in acknowledging the generosity of the giver. To have either wealth, wit, or beauty, is generally a temptation to a woman to put an unreasonable value upon herself; but with all these, in a degree which drew upon you the addresses of men of the amplest fortunes, you bestowed your person where you could have no expectations but from the gratitude of the receiver, though you knew he could exert that gratitude in no other returns but esteem and love. For which must I first thank you? for what you have denied yourself, or for what you have bestowed on me?

I owe to you, that for my sake you have overlooked the prospect of living in pomp and plenty, and I have not been circumspect enough to preserve you from care and sorrow. I will not dwell upon this particular; you are so good a wife, that I know you think I rob you of more than I can give, when I say any thing in your favour to my own disadvantage.

* This letter was prefixed to the third volume of "The Ladies Library."

Whoever

Whoever should see or hear you, would think it were worth leaving all the world for you; while I, habitually possessed of that happiness, have been throwing away impotent endeavours for the rest of mankind, to the neglect of her for whom any other man, in his senses, would be apt to sacrifice every thing else *.

I know not by what unreasonable prepossession it is, but methinks there must be something austere to give authority to wisdom; and I cannot account for having only rallied many seasonable sentiments of yours, but that you are too beautiful to appear judicious.

One may grow fond, but not wise, from what is said by so lovely a counsellor. Hard fate, that you have been lessened by your perfections, and lost power by your charms!

That ingenuous spirit in all your behaviour, that familiar grace in your words and actions, has for this seven years only inspired admiration and love;

* The following inscriptive epistle, which he afterwards elegantly enlarged in the above admirable letter, seems to have been Steele's first thought for a dedication to his "Lady's Library."

"To Mrs. Mary Steele,
The tender mother,
The fond wife,
The prudent mistress,
The frugal housekeeper,
The chearful companion,
The happy slave to
Her powerful husband,

Richard Steele.

In the "Theatre," No XII. Steele laments the loss of his wife, as "the best woman that ever man had;" and says, "that she frequently lamented and pined at his neglect of himself."

but

but experience has taught me, the best counsel I ever have received has been pronounced by the fairest and softest lips; and convinced me that I am in you blest with a wise friend, as well as a charming mistress.

Your mind shall no longer suffer by your person; nor shall your eyes, for the future, dazzle me into a blindness towards your understanding *. I rejoice in this public occasion to shew my esteem for you; and must do you the justice to say, that there can be no virtue represented in all this Collection for the female world, which I have not known you exert, as far as the opportunities of your fortune have given you leave. Forgive me, that my heart overflows with love and gratitude for daily instances of your prudent œconomy, the just disposition you make of your little affairs, your chearfulness in dispatch of them, your prudent forbearance of any reflections that they might have needed less vigilance had you disposed of your fortune suitably; in short, for all the arguments you every day give me of a generous and sincere affection.

It is impossible for me to look back on many evils and pains which I have suffered since we came together, without a pleasure which is not to be expressed, from the proofs I have had, in those cir-

* Dr. Swift, speaking of his friend Steele, in his Journal to Stella, says, "We have scurvy *Tatlers* of late: so pray do not suspect me. I have one or two hints I design to send him, and never any more: he does not deserve it. He is governed by his wife most abominably, as bad as ——. I never saw her since I came; nor has he ever made me an invitation; either he dares not, or is such a thoughtless *Tisdal* fellow, that he never minds it." Swift, Journal to Stella, Nov. 3, 1710.

cumstances, of your unwearied goodness. How often has your tenderness removed pain from my sick head! how often anguish from my afflicted heart! With how skilful patience have I known you comply with the vain projects which pain has suggested, to have an aching limb removed by journeying from one side of a room to another! how often, the next instant, travelled the same ground again, without telling your patient it was to no purpose to change his situation! If there are such beings as Guardian Angels, thus are they employed. I will no more believe one of them more good in its inclinations, than I can conceive it more charming in its form, than my Wife.

But I offend; and forget that what I say to you is to appear in public. You are so great a lover of home, that I know it will be irksome to you to go into the world even in an applause. I will end this without so much as mentioning your little flock, or your own amiable figure at the head of it. That I think them preferable to all other children, I know, is the effect of passion and instinct. That I believe you the best of Wives, I know, proceeds from experience and reason.

I am, Madam,
Your most obliged husband,
and most obedient humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

274. TO

274. TO MRS. STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S COFFEE-HOUSE,
DEAR PRUE, JULY 31, 1714.

THE news is come hither that the Queen is dead *. I am,

Dear Prue,

Your most affectionate,

and most obedient husband,

RICH. STEELE.

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275. TO MRS. STEELE.

THATCHED-HOUSE, ST. JAMES'S-STREET,
DEAR PRUE, AUG. 4, 1714.

I HAVE been loaded with compliments from the Regents, and assured of something immediately, but have not heard what answer Philips brings from Scott. I desire you to send me a guinea. I shall have cash in the morning. I wait here to speak with Cadogan, with whom I would explain the posture of my affairs more earnestly.

Faithfully yours, RICH. STEELE.

* This was a little premature; but the Queen actually died next morning, a little after seven o'clock, August 1, 1714, in the 50th year of her age, and the 13th year of her reign.

276. TO MRS. STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, AUG. 6, 1714.

I WAS obliged to borrow of Mr. Minshull * money to pay Scott 50*l.*

He obliged me to dine with him, after which I must go to Mr. Moore *, and after that to Mr. Ashurst, and after that to the delight of my eyes, your dear self. RICH. STEELE.

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277. TO MRS. STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, AUG. 8, 1714.

I SEND Wilmot; but stay at St. James's, because they talk of great news, which I will bring you; and am,

Your most obedient husband,

RICH. STEELE.

* Mr. Minshull, Mr. Moore, Mr. Lechmere, Bp. Hoadly, and Addison, were all said to have been concerned with Steele in the composition, revisal, and correction of "The Crisis," which was published in Steele's name, Jan. 19, 1713-14. See before, p. 296.

278. TO MRS. STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, ST. JAMES'S, AUG. 15, 1714.

I HAVE been with Cadogan *, who gives me great hopes of success in the patent for farthings †. — Baron Bothmar dines with him, and he will have me be there.

If I do not deserve good-fortune, I hope being joined to you and yours will be, in the sight of Heaven, a motive for blessing me, who, with God's grace, shall grow better.

Your obedient husband, RICH. STEELE.

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279. TO MRS. STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, ST. JAMES'S, AUG. 23, 1714.

I HAVE ordered Willmot to carry home the things you speak of in Covent-garden. I shall be with the Brodericks ‡ and others till after eleven o'clock this night, for which I hope you will pardon me; but I will not drink.

Willmot will tell you about the house in this street.

Your obedient husband, RICH. STEELE.

* The famous General, afterwards Earl Cadogan; of whom see before, p. 304.

† This seems to have been an abortive project.

‡ Thomas Broderick. esq. was elected at the same time with Steele a representative for Stockbridge. See p. 292.

280. TO

280. TO MRS. STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, SEPT. 8, 1714.

I SHALL dine at Cleland's *, in order to see Lady Marlborough † as soon as she is at leisure after dinner. I have spoken to two or three of the Justices; and I think all will do well ‡.

Your most obedient husband,

RICH. STEELE.

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281. FROM MR. ROYSTON MEREDITH §.

SIR, OCT. 21, 1714.

IF I mistake not, you are the gentleman who, of late, has been so great a stickler for the liberty,

* The friend and correspondent of Pope; and supposed to be the Will Honeycomb of "The Spectator." His son, an eccentric character, is well known by several licentious publications, and by his visionary writings on Celtic etymologies.

† On the subject possibly of the History of her Lord. In the sixth number of "The Reader," May 3, 1714, Steele gives an account of his design to write the history of the Duke of Marlborough, from the date of his commission of Captain-general and Plenipotentiary, to the expiration of those commissions. The materials were then in his custody; but the work, which afterwards devolved to Glover and Mallet, to whom the Duchess gave by her will 1000*l.* for that purpose, is still unexecuted.

‡ In October 1714, Steele was appointed supervisor of the Theatre-royal, at the salary of 700*l.* in the room of William Collier, Esq. M. P. for Truro. Weekly Packet, Oct. 16.

§ This and the three following letters were originally published in 1714, in a pamphlet, intituled, "Mr. Steele detected:

or,

rights, and properties of the subject; but it seems can (for a little dirty money, which you spend as vainly as you get * idly), invade those of your fellow-subjects, and that knowingly, wilfully, and premeditatedly; I said *knowingly*, in that you have not received so little copy-money † as to be ignorant of the right and property every Bookseller hath to his copies; which you well know to be the same with that a gentleman has to his estate. I say *wilfully and premeditatedly*, because, after such knowledge, you still persist in your unjust practices. And, to yet aggravate and enhance your guilt, you have (as it were) ploughed the lands of two poor orphans, who have very little else to subsist on; a sin which will cry aloud for vengeance. These lines, how mean soever they be, are my own; which is more than you can, or dare (if you have any honesty or modesty left) say of "The Ladies Library;" wherein you have so greatly injured Royston Meredith, servant to ‡ . . . . . in : . . . . where I expect and demand a speedy and satisfactory answer. Sir, before you had collected so many

or, the poor and oppressed Orphan's Letters to the great and arbitrary Mr. Steele; complaining of the great Injustice done to the Publick in general, and to himself in particular, by the Ladies Library, published by Mr. Steele; together with Mr. Steele's Answers, and some just Reflections on them."—But the *integrity* of Steele, whatever other failings he may have had, will overbalance the harsh obloquy of an exasperated adversary.

* By other men's labour. R. M.

† And that for others writings too. R. M.

‡ These letters are exactly the same with those sent to Mr. Steele, except leaving out my master's name and place of abode, which, for some reasons, is thought proper to be omitted. R. M.

and

and whole sections out of Bishop Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," (which, be pleased to take notice, is my copy), you would have acted very prudently seriously to have perused that of "Restitution," where you might have read these words: "Better it is to go begging to Heaven, than to go to Hell laden with the spoils of rapine and injustice."

To conclude: till, by some means or other, you make compensation for the damage which I have and shall sustain from that book, I must and will write myself, the highly injured

ROYSTON MEREDITH.

282. TO MR. MEREDITH.

SIR, OCT. 21, 1714.

I WILL enquire into what you write about, and write again about the subject of yours to,

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

283. FROM

283. FROM MR. MEREDITH.

SIR, OCT. 25, 1714.

THESE come to claim your promise of an answer to my former, which with great impatience has been expected; but not having yet received any, gives me just reason to conclude that you have been consulting with the great Mr. Tonson *, from whom (when I demanded satisfaction) this answer was given me: "How that he paid copy-money, and that I must apply myself to the author for redress." My reply to him was, "That the Law should then decide it." To which Mr. Tonson had the assurance to say, "It was better to be doing than talking;" which words I conceive to imply an open defiance to me, notwithstanding he cannot be ignorant how that the Common Law, the High Court of Chancery, and even a late Act of Parliament, "for securing the Right and Property of Booksellers to their Copies," will all plead in my behalf. But perhaps Mr. Tonson may imagine, that a poor orphan, and one whom he may (falsely) think destitute of friends, will never be able to cope with so potent an adversary as himself; but be pleased, Sir, to inform him, that it is my resolution (without ample satisfaction given me) to maintain my right, and have recourse to the Law for justice. To these an immediate answer is expected; otherwise the publick shall be apprised of the great injustice

* Mr. Steele's bookseller in ordinary. R. M.

done

done to them in general, and in particular to the poor and oppressed orphan,

ROYSTON MEREDITH.

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284. TO MR. MEREDITH.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,

SIR, OCT. 26, 1714.

I HAVE a second letter from you. The style of the first was very harsh to one whom you are not at all acquainted with; but there were suggestions in it which might give excuse for being out of humour at one whom you might perhaps think was the occasion of damage to you. You mentioned also an Orphan, which word was a defence against any warm reply; but, since you are pleased to go on in an intemperate way of talk, I shall give myself no more trouble to enquire about what you complain, but rest satisfied in doing all the good offices I can to the Reverend Author's Grandchild, now in town. Thus, leaving you to contend about your title to his writings, and wishing you success if you have justice on your side, I beg you will give me no more ill language, and you will oblige,

Sir,

Your humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

285. TO

285. TO WILLIAM HONEYCOMB, ESQ.*

THE seven former volumes of the Spectator having been dedicated to some of the most celebrated persons of the age, I take leave to inscribe this eighth and last to you, as to a gentleman who hath ever been ambitious of appearing in the best company †.

You are now wholly retired from the busy part of mankind, and at leisure to reflect upon your past atchievements; for which reason I look upon you as a person very well qualified for a dedication.

I may possibly disappoint my readers, and yourself too, if I do not endeavour, on this occasion, to make the world acquainted with your virtues. And here, Sir, I shall not compliment you upon your birth, person, or fortune; nor any other the like perfections, which you possess whether you will or no: but shall only touch upon those which are of your own acquiring, and in which every one must allow you have a real merit.

Your janty air and easy motion, the volubility of your discourse, the suddenness of your laugh, the management of your snuff-box, with the whiteness of your hands and teeth (which have justly gained you the envy of the most polite part of the male world, and the love of the greatest beauties in the

* Generally supposed to be Colonel Cleland. See p. 358.

† This dedication, prefixed to the Eighth volume of "The Spectator," is suspected to have been written by Eustace Budgell, who might have better dedicated it to Will Wimble.

female),

female), are entirely to be ascribed to your own personal genius and application.

You are formed for these accomplishments by a happy turn of nature, and have finished yourself in them by the utmost improvements of art. A man that is defective in either of these qualifications (whatever may be the secret ambition of his heart) must never hope to make the figure you have done, among the fashionable part of his species. It is therefore no wonder we see such multitudes of aspiring young men fall short of you in all these beauties of your character, notwithstanding the study and practice of them is the whole business of their lives. But I need not tell you that the free and disengaged behaviour of a fine gentleman makes as many aukward Beaux, as the easiness of your Favourite hath made insipid Poets.

At present you are content to aim all your charms at your own spouse, without farther thought of mischief to any others of the sex. I know you had formerly a very great contempt for that pedantic race of mortals who call themselves Philosophers; and yet, to your honour be it spoken, there is not a Sage of them all could have better acted up to their precepts in one of the most important points of life: I mean, in that generous disregard of popular opinion which you shewed some years ago, when you chose for your wife an obscure young woman, who doth not indeed pretend to an antient family, but has certainly as many forefathers as any lady in the land, if she could but reckon up their names.

I must

I must own, I conceived very extraordinary hopes of you from the moment that you confessed your age, and from eight-and-forty (where you had stuck so many years) very ingeniously stepped into your grand climacterick. Your deportment has since been very venerable and becoming. If I am rightly informed, you make a regular appearance every quarter-sessions among your brothers of the *quorum*; and, if things go on as they do, stand fair for being a colonel of the militia. I am told that your time passes away as agreeably in the amusements of a country life, as it ever did in the gallantries of the town; and that you now take as much pleasure in the planting of young trees, as you did formerly in the cutting down of your old ones. In short, we hear from all hands that you are thoroughly reconciled to your dirty acres, and have not too much wit to look into your own estate.

After having spoken thus much of my Patron, I must take the privilege of an Author in saying something of myself. I shall therefore beg leave to add, that I have purposely omitted setting those marks to the end of every paper, which appeared in my former volumes, that you may have an opportunity of shewing Mrs. Honeycomb the shrewdness of your conjectures, by ascribing every speculation to its proper author: though you know how often many profound Criticks in style and sentiments have very judiciously erred in this particular, before they were let into the secret. I am, Sir,

Your most faithful, humble servant,

THE SPECTATOR.

286. TO MRS. STEELE.

BOROUGHBRIDGE,

DEAR DEAREST PRUE, JAN. 27, 1714-15.

I HOPE this will find you well, as I am at this present writing. I send Willmot to know how you do only, and to bring the book concerning the Law of Elections; or, what is better, let him bring the green covers with him. If you have a letter with a note of Warner's, send it hither, and I will have it of his neighbour Mr. Jessop *.

I write now among dancing, singing, hooping, hallooing, and drinking. I think I shall succeed. My dear, I love you to death.

If the bill is not come, and you have a guinea or two, send them; for I would not borrow till my bill comes, which will certainly be next arrival of the post to York. RICH. STEELE.

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287. TO MRS. STEELE †.

BOROUGHBRIDGE, 12 AT NIGHT,

DEAR PRUE, JAN. 28, 1714-15.

I OBEY your directions exactly, and avoid drinking, and every thing else that might give you any trouble. The precept for electing members for this

* See p. 368.

† "At Mr. Harrison's, over against the Black Man, in Coney-street, York."

place

place came hither to-day, and the election is to be on Wednesday. It looks with a good face on my side. I take the opportunity of writing by the gentleman who keeps the Black Man. He has very much pleased me with an account that you had a river at the end of your garden. There will be there, I doubt not, a thousand prayers offered up, to grant me discretion, and the ease of this world.

You and yours, I fear, will make me covetous; I am sure you have made me value wealth much more than I ever thought I should: but indeed I have a reason which makes it worth the pursuit: it will make me more agreeable to you *.

I am indeed, Prue, intirely yours,

RICH. STEELE.

I hope Nanny does not misbehave, so as to disturb your tranquillity.

If the post should this night not bring me money, I find I can have money in the country, and draw a bill on Mr. Castleman at London.

* See Letter 294, and note, *ad finem*.

288. TO MRS. STEELE.

BOROUGHBRIDGE,

DEAR PRUE, FEB. 1, 1714-15.

I AM astonished Warner has not sent me a bill before now. Mr. Jessop * is at the neighbouring borough, where he is to be chosen this morning.

I will take twenty pounds of him, and send you money by an express, which I will send to you to-morrow with advice of our success here.

The election is to be between eight and eleven in the morning. I am,

Dear Prue, ever thine, RICH. STEELE.

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289. TO MRS. STEELE †.

BOROUGHBRIDGE,

DEAR PRUE, FEB. 4, 1714-15.

THIS is to acquaint you that I will be with you ou Saturday, and then settle your journey home; which I propose shall be in the coach this day se'nnight.

I have got money; and you shall hear of me again to-morrow morning.

* William Jessop, esq. elected in this and several succeeding Parliaments for Aldborough in Yorkshire.

† "At Mr. Harrison's, at York, Coney-street."

Mr.

Mr. Jessop has been very zealous in my election, and stood by with his skill and knowledge on the spot.

Yours ever, RICH. STEELE.

290. TO MR. WALPOLE *.

SIR, [1715.]

WHOEVER reads the following "Apology" will easily allow me, that I am much less concerned for

* Robert Walpole, esq. born August 26, 1674, was chosen member for King's-Lynn in 1700; and continued to represent that Corporation till created an Earl; excepting the interval of one Session, when he was expelled the House (Dec. 30, 1711), and sent to the Tower. He was appointed of the Council to Prince George, Lord High Admiral, in June 1705; Secretary at War, Feb. 12, 1707-8; Treasurer of the Navy, Jan. 13, 1709-10. On Dr. Sacheverell's impeachment, Mr. Walpole was one of the Managers. He was removed from his employments in August 1710; and was not in any office during the rest of the Queen's reign. He was appointed Paymaster of the Forces Sept. 24, 1714; and sworn of the Privy Council Oct. 1; constituted First Lord Commissioner of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer Oct. 10, 1715; and the same year was elected Chairman of "the Committee of Secrecy." He resigned his high places April 10, 1717; but was appointed Paymaster of the Forces June 4, 1720; and resumed his offices in the Treasury April 4, 1721. He was one of the Lords Justices and sole Secretary of State in 1723, during the absence of the Lords Townsend and Carteret, who went with the King to Hanover. He was elected a Knight of the Bath in 1725, and was again one of the Lords Justices; was elected a Knight of the Garter in 1726, and installed June 16. He was a third time one of the

the fame of a writer than that of an honest man. I have declared the assistances I had in composing the writings which are here defended *; for the upright purpose, the innocent intention of them, is all which I am anxious to assert. In defence of truth, I incurred popular hatred and contempt, with the prospect of suffering the want even of the ordinary conveniences of life. The probability of being undone I could not but form to myself when I took upon me what I did; but a weight heavier than all this fell upon me, to wit, a resolution of the Representatives of my Country to my dishonour. This indeed was a blow unexpected; nor could it enter into my imagination, that the insolence of any Minister could run so high, as to demand of the House of Commons to punish one of its Members for being unacceptable to him. The perusal of this pamphlet will convince the reader, there was not so much as the appearance of any other motive for my expul-

Lords Justices in 1727. On the accession of king George II. he was continued in all his high posts; was chosen a Governor of the Charter-house, and attended at the Coronation as a Privy Counsellor and Knight of the Garter. In the first Session of the Parliament which met Dec. 4, 1741, finding a strong party against him in the Nation as well as in the Parliament, he resigned all his places; and was created, Feb. 9, 1741-2, Baron Houghton, Viscount Walpole, and Earl of Orford. He afterwards, the inquiry into his conduct being dropt, or rather suspended, lived a very retired life, enjoying rest from his labours, the sweets of private friendship, and the esteem and love of his Sovereign; but was much afflicted with the stone, which at length put a period to his life, March 18, 1745-6, in his 72d year.

* Prefixed to Steele's "Apology for himself and his Writings, 1715."

sion.

sion. The day of debate was indeed a very memorable one, and the persons concerned in it hugely worth suspending the councils of a Nation. It was remarkable however, that such was the force of truth, that the Member accused had not an harsh personal expression used against him; and the Minister, in the midst of all his power, who brought on the accusation, was treated in the manner which all mankind knows he deserves. As for my part, I ever thought meanly of the capacity, though not, till lately, of the good-nature of that Demagogue, and saw very well his audaciousness would one day suffer by his ignorance. It was visible, whatever became of his Country, which I believe had little share in his Lordship's cares, he would, with the wand in his hand, raise powers which he would want skill to command, and which consequently would tear himself in pieces.

But, without dwelling upon the contemplation of mischiefs wrought by a cunning wicked creature, placed in a station proper only for a wise and virtuous man, I am now to give you my thanks for your generous defence of me in this great adversity. Your behaviour was indeed equally noble during the whole French Administration; and your eloquence was of public service to your Country, when the Prerogative was strained to the utmost, not to exalt our own Sovereign, but to compliment France with the greatness and interest of her and her people. The intervention of Providence has given us a stand against the imminent destruction which such iniquity and folly had placed before our eyes, and

men in great employments can now be safe without depending upon France.

I have mentioned Dunkirk till I am sick; and there are not words to represent the infamous behaviour of a Ministry, to cover so great and pernicious an imposture upon their Country, as the improvement of that Port under the pretence of the demolition of it.

You have the honour and happiness to have eminently opposed all the incursions which these guilty men made upon the greatness of the Crown, and the welfare of the subject, by prostituting them both to their own selfish designs, and destroying, as far as in them lay, the good name of all men of virtue and service.

They have indeed reaped this good, that there can be nothing said of themselves, the worst servants that ever Sovereign employed, but what they had caused to be laid to the charge of those who were their predecessors; persons whose abilities had raised their Country to such a grandeur, that nothing but the unnatural industry of her own Ministers could lower, to the helpless condition to which they had reduced it.

These evils could not have been supported, had not the Demagogues, by the abuse of power, deafened many in the Legislature against attention to the true interest of themselves and their Country; while an inconsiderable creature, who had the good-will of no man, could manage aversions skilfully enough, to be suffered to destroy all, for fear of an alteration of affairs that might be grateful to an opposite party.

Were

Were the following instance of the harsh and odious disposition in gentlemen to sit determined before hearing, the concern only of me and mine, it would not be worth troubling the world with so many words on the occasion. But neither what I now write, nor what you much better spoke, is a case of so little consequence; and when you undertook it, you knew you were pleading for the rights and liberties of the Commons of England; and I will take upon me ta say, that there never was a greater insult on the Constitution than this, except one practised by the same person, without the least deference to the order of things, the common sense of mankind, the honour of the Crown, or the property of the subject.

It needs not be said what this greater impudence was, nor who had so little grace as to be guilty of it: it was he who was born in our days for the chastisement and dishonour of them, a tool whose insignificancy makes sorrow, occasioned by him, the subject of laughter, takes all dignity from distress, and renders calamity ridiculous.

As to my own part under the fantastical tyranny of the Demagogue's administration, could what you said in the House be communicated to the publick, I should have no need of this defence. But since I have not here the assistance of your eloquence, I beg the advantage of your name and character: for I know it will be an argument with every honest man that my cause was good, that you so zealously espoused it; for that admirable talent of speaking, of which you are master, has never been prostituted to serve dishonest purposes; and you have too can-

did

did a spirit, not to esteem it a praise, rather than disparagement of your eloquence, that the cause for which you have at any time pleaded needed no art but from the iniquity of its opposers.

The happy ability of explaining the most difficult parts of business to men wholly unacquainted with negotiation, has been as useful to the publick as honourable to yourself. As you have detected the artful, so you have helped the ignorant of your very adversaries, according to their intention to abuse or serve their country.

It has been said, that the greatest art is to hide art; but you have a much better instrument towards persuasion, the having nothing to conceal; for truth is as certainly the greatest eloquence, as honesty is the best policy. Let those who speak or act against their conscience, obtain their little purposes and applauses; be it ever your commendation, to despise artifice, and practise uprightness. A long course of suffering for your zeal in an honest cause, has gained you the character of an open honest English gentleman, with a capacity which takes off the imputation of weakness from simplicity of manners, and adds the dignity of knowledge to the beauty of innocence.

As I never entered into political debates with ambitious views, but have brought my desires within the necessaries and decent conveniences of life, I am the more jealously tenacious of the little I expect of the world; which is, only to accept of my service to the best of my ability, without loading me with unjust reproach. In this reasonable expectation Mr. Walpole generously lent me his protection;

tection; and though he could not persuade my judges to do me justice, he convinced them I deserved a different sentence from what they pronounced. But, alas! they had learned, by long practice, to do shameful things without being ashamed; and though your arguments could command their assent, it could not make them utter it in my favour. You sent them away, I thank you, with the same thoughts of themselves which you had of them; and whatever force and oppression determined, in the eye of reason and conscience the judges were convict, and the accused man found innocent.

I humbly thank you for your eminent part in this affair, and congratulate you on receiving the favour of your Prince *, for your service to your Country.

As doing good to the publick is the motive of conferring favours, it is, with such as you, the rule in enjoying them. I wish you the possession of all your frank heart desires; and am, with great respect,

Sir,

Your most obliged, most obedient,
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

* Mr. Walpole was at that time Paymaster of the Forces, and a Privy Counsellor. See p. 369.

291. ADDRESS

291. ADDRESS TO THE KING *;

WRITTEN BY STEELE.

To the KING'S Most Excellent MAJESTY.

The humble Address of the Right Honourable the Earl of Clare, Lord Lieutenant, and the Deputy Lieutenants of the County of Middlesex, and City and Liberty of Westminster;

WE your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lord Lieutenant and Deputy Lieutenants of the county of Middlesex, and city and liberty of Westminster, beg leave, upon our first public meeting, to congratulate your Majesty upon your safe and peaceable accession to your undoubted right. We receive the invaluable blessing with all the proper sentiments of undissembled joy, affection, and zeal.

* "April 7, 1715, the Deputy Lieutenants for the county of Middlesex, and city and liberty of Westminster, gave a most magnificent and splendid entertainment to the Right Honourable the Earl of Clare, their Lord Lieutenant, the Lord Viscount Townshend, General Stanhope, the Earl of Lincoln, and several other persons of distinction. At this meeting the Lord Lieutenant and Deputy Lieutenants agreed upon an address drawn up by Richard Steele, Esquire, one of their body; which, the next day, the Earl of Clare, at the head of his Deputy Lieutenants, being introduced by the Lord Viscount Townshend, presented to his Majesty. His Majesty, as a mark of his special favour, was pleased, on this occasion, to bestow the honour of knighthood on three of the Deputy Lieutenants, *viz.* Robert Thornhill, Richard Steele, and George Cooke, Esquires." Political State, vol. IX. p. 273.

Our

Our joy is the joy of men whose past fears heighten their present satisfaction: fears which have no other proof that they were imaginary, but that Providence hath been much more merciful to us than we could in reason expect.

The liberty and happiness of mankind was the glorious cause, and the glorious end, of that Revolution which transmitted to us our present security: a transaction which, since your Majesty's accession to the Crown, shines with redoubled lustre, and bears upon it such characters of glory as they, who have not hitherto been able or willing to see, cannot escape enjoying in its influences upon the public welfare.

This happiness appears confirmed to us, when we behold a British Parliament once more anxious for the British honour, equally disposed to enquire into the behaviour of those who diminished it, and to rescue the injured reputation of the illustrious men by whose counsels and actions it was once raised to the highest pitch of greatness.

From these concurring circumstances we assure ourselves, that the time is now come, wherein integrity and uprightness shall no longer be distinguished from true policy; wherein cunning shall no longer pass for wisdom, nor deceitfulness for prudence; but the measures of a wise, just, beneficent, and steady Administration, shall establish the prosperity of these Realms, by a strict alliance with those Powers, the abandoning of whom has so manifestly appeared fatal to them and ourselves.

On this occasion permit us further to congratulate your Majesty, in that we cannot but daily observe

serve numbers of your Majesty's subjects act according to their real sentiments; and to extricate themselves from the ill impressions under which they were misled by artful men, to make choice of such as favoured designs destructive of the liberties of that very Constitution which they were elected to preserve and defend.

As for us, whom your Majesty has entrusted with the Militia of this County, we solemnly promise, that we will faithfully execute the trust reposed in us; that we will be so far from encouraging or conniving at any of those riots and disorders which your Majesty has justly complained of, as the reproach of some late years, that no endeavours on our part shall be wanting, to prevent and suppress the least tendency to any commotion.

We flatter ourselves that our latest posterity shall enjoy those blessings we now do in your Majesty's reign, from the eminent virtues of the Prince of Wales, and the pleasing prospect of his numerous issue: which that they may do, are the sincere prayers of your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects."

[To which his Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious answer:]

"I thank you for your very loyal and dutiful address."

292. TO THE EARL OF CLARE *.

MY LORD, [1715.]

THE following papers were written to confront daring and wicked men in the prosecution of purposes destructive to their Country †. The honest intention of them was what first recommended me to your Lordship's friendship; and I hope you will forgive me that I cannot conceal a circumstance so advantageous to the fame of them as that of your Lordship's approbation.

The painful struggle under so great a difficulty as explaining with a Ministry in open contradiction to their proceedings, is what can be supported by

* Thomas Lord Pelham, the adopted heir to his uncle John Duke of Newcastle, was born Aug. 1, 1693; became Baron Pelham, Feb. 23, 1711-12; was created Earl of Clare, and Viscount Houghton, Oct. 26, 1714; made Custos Rotulorum of the county of Middlesex, Nov. 10, and of Westminster, Dec. 28, 1714; and the same year Steward of Sherwood Forest; created Marquis and Duke of Newcastle upon Tyne, Aug. 2, 1715; elected a Knight of the Garter, July 22, 1718. On resigning the post of Lord Chamberlain, April 2, 1724, he was appointed Secretary of State; chosen Recorder of Nottingham in April, 1726; High Steward of Cambridge in July 1737; Chancellor of that University, 1749; First Lord of the Treasury, on the death of his brother, 1754, a post which he held with a small interval until the year 1762, when he resigned it; was created Duke of Newcastle under Line, Nov. 13, 1756; appointed Lord Privy Seal, July 15, 1765, but continued so only about one year. He died Nov. 17, 1768.

† This letter was prefixed to Steele's "Political Writings, 1715."

nothing

nothing less than the testimony of a good conscience, and an heart pure from a vicious ambition. And these are such supports as will keep a man from languishing in discontent, should he, amidst the prosperities of the cause he has endeavoured to serve, live to find zeal for the publick, of all human virtues, the most exposed to the cool comfort of being its own reward; and that which was undertaken against the inclinations to mirth and pleasure, out of a sense of duty and honour, to have little other effect than to become a man's characteristick, and by that means to give a turbulent air to all his other pretensions; and even to sink the agreeableness of the friend and companion, by the appearance of somewhat supposed to be demanding in the patriot.

But why do I mention these things here? All the world is witness, that it hath been your Lordship's early inclination to find out and encourage the lovers of your Country, to comfort them under the neglect of their friends, and support them against the resentment of their enemies.

Your Lordship is produced by Providence, in an ample and flowing fortune, to make a stand for honesty, and to preserve the names of Virtue and Honour from oblivion. Whoever has exerted himself for the publick, has at your house a friend and a benefactor: distinctions are there made by the rule of reason and justice; a young and noble heart, generously disposed by Nature, and fortified by letters, can determine, in spite of prevailing fashion to the contrary, that good and evil are really distinct

distinct considerations, and that "to distinguish virtuous men is the best knowledge of the world."

I could give a thousand instances of your Lordship's great humanity this way, and of your having attained in your first years to be "the terror of ill, and the refuge of good men." What can fondness itself wish more for a man, than to have wealth, and the best sense in the use of it; than to be elegantly delightful, artlessly eloquent, discreetly sincere, and judiciously bountiful? Your Lordship will be transmitted to futurity by the professors of those liberal arts you protect and encourage. The present I now make you can give me no opportunity to endeavour that way. But, as these occasional writings are arguments against the incursions made upon our liberty, and written even when those innovations were first attempted; I humbly desire your Lordship's protection to them and their author, who is, with the utmost integrity,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged, most obedient, and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

293. TO

293. TO MRS.* STEELE†.

DEAR PRUE, CLAREMONT, APRIL 10, 1715.

MY Lord Clare‡ (who you will own to have some pretence to command me) will not let me come away from hence this night. Pray forgive your most obedient, humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

* This *might* have been addressed, "To *Lady* Steele."

† At her house, over against Park-place, St. James's.

‡ Afterward the patriotic Duke of Newcastle. Steele had just before dedicated to him the Collection of his "Political Writings," (see p. 379.) This Nobleman, who was then Lord-lieutenant of the county of Middlesex, had not long before placed Steele in the commission of the peace for that county, and appointed him one of his Deputy-lieutenants. It was in this capacity that, two days only before the date of this letter, he was knighted, on presenting to the King an address from the Lieutenancy of Middlesex and Westminster, which Steele had the honour of drawing up. About the same time he was appointed Surveyor of the Royal stables at Hampton-court. On the 28th of May following, being the King's birth-day, who then entered his 56th year, Sir Richard particularly distinguished himself, by treating above 200 gentlemen and ladies. The entertainment consisted of pyramids of all manner of sweetmeats, the most generous wines, such as burgundy, champaign, &c. was ushered in by a prologue written by Tickell and spoken by Mrs. Younger; and concluded by an epilogue written by himself, and spoken by Mr. Wilks, very merry, and free with his own character; after which, a large table that was in the area of the concert-house was taken away, to make room for the company to dance country-dances, which was done with great decency and regularity. An Ode of Horace was also set to musick on this occasion; with several songs and other entertaining performances.

294. TO

294. TO LADY STEELE.

SPEAKER'S CHAMBERS,

DEAR PRUE, AUG. 14, 1715.

I WRITE this before I go to Lord Marlborough's, to let you know that there was no one at the Treasury but Kelsey, with whom Welsted* left the order, and he is to be at the Treasury again to-morrow between two and three: when, without doubt, the money will be paid †.

* Leonard Welsted, an ingenious young clerk in the office of one of the secretaries of state, whom Steele very highly esteemed. Welsted had not long before this addressed to him two several poetical publications; an imitation of an Ode of Horace, under the title of "A Prophecy," and "An Epistle on the "King's Accession."

† In the notes on the Dunciad, Mr. Welsted (among much equally wanton abuse) is reproached with having "received at "one time 500l. for secret service, among the other excellent "Authors hired to write anonymously for the Ministry." This idle calumny (which arose from that sum appearing in the Report of the Secret Committee, 1742, as issued "to Leonard Welsted, "gent. for special services, Aug. 27, 1715") was refuted in the Biographia Britannica, art. *Steele*, p. 3830, note U, on the authority of Welsted's own declaration to Mr. Walthoe, an alderman of St. Alban's, "that he received the money for the use of "Sir R. Steele, and paid it to him." If any farther proof of this assertion were wanting, we have here the express testimony of Steele himself, that the money was issued for his use. And we are so far indebted to the author of the Dunciad, that he has unwittingly contributed to illustrate this letter, which would otherwise have wanted a clue.

On the 19th of July 1715 was advertized, "*Sir Richard Steele's Recantation*; proved in a Letter of Thanks from his Holiness

I have no hopes from that or any thing else*, but by dint of riches to get the government of your Ladyship.

Yours, RICH. STEELE.

Holiness Pope Clement XI. for the Service done to the Catholic Church, by the Dedication and Preface of a late Book, intituled, *An Account of the State of the Roman Catholic Religion throughout the World*, with a Copy of Verses added by Mr. Sewell. Price 6d." *Postboy, July* 19, 1715.

* It appears from this and other passages in these letters, that Lady Steele had an undue love of money, which was a source of much vexation to herself, and of some uneasiness to her husband. There is a presumptive proof of this in the following quotation, which is happily illustrated in this publication. Steele, in his "Englishman," celebrates the greatness and equanimity of a poor man with a *tar neckcloth*, who, with perfect *sang-froid*, was first informed at a coffee-house of his having got a prize of 10,000l. in the Lottery. After strictly and coolly examining into the truth of the information, he turned out of his pocket half-a-crown and six-pence. Presenting the half-crown to the waiter, "It is all I have got now [said he], but I will call another time, and give you more for your good news." Having related the incident with his usual spirit and high approbation, Steele adds, "I speak it sincerely, I had much rather have his temper than his fortune; for had it happened to me, alas! I should have given it, like a slave as I am, to *a woman who despises me without it*. Hang her, however, I wish I had it for her sake." Englishman, N°. 47, Jan. 21, 1714-15.

THE

295. THE HUMBLE ADDRESS of the Bailiff, Burghers, and Burgesses of BOROUGHBRIDGE in the County of York; presented by Sir Richard Steele and Thomas Wilkinson, Esq; their Representatives in Parliament, being introduced by his Grace the Duke of Newcastle, in August 1723.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

IT is impossible for us to express to your Majesty our just grief and indignation at the unnatural efforts which have been made by wicked men to disturb the peace of your Government, and prepare the way for an Outlaw who disputes your right.

We bewail it as the dishonour of our Country, that a Prince, who commands universal esteem and veneration from all the world about us, should be insulted by a Faction in Great-Britain, and leave his old subjects in tears, to suffer by the ingratitude of his new ones. It is our shame and unhappiness, that there are any among us who can meditate injuries to a Hero who brought us safety and honour, and rescued our liberty from the most imminent danger; but the conduct of these persons raises our resentments more than our wonder. It has been long their character, to assert the unlawfulness of resisting the worst Princes, and to rise in rebellion against the best.

Your Majesty has been pleased to declare, that these disorders are kept up with the hopes of Foreign assistance, and that the Pretender is preparing to invade us. We think it therefore our duty

to give your Majesty the most solemn assurances, that all which you have secured to us, shall be employed in maintaining your just title to these realms. And we will not doubt, but that those arms which made the English name so famed abroad, will maintain their credit at home; and that the same valour which conquered France, shall be able to protect Britain.

Let treachery and imposture try their fate; let our adversaries contend for the glory of being successful traitors and prosperous enemies to their Country; while all honest men resolve to vindicate themselves from the infamy of transmitting chains to their posterity. We know the just value of our Religion and of our properties; we know what is due to a Prince who has preserved them to us; and we hope, with the rest of your Majesty's good subjects, we shall stand in the eye of the world as men who deserve these blessings, by our resolution in defending them.

The present occasion fills our minds with an honest zeal. We profess to support your Majesty at the expence of our fortunes, and the hazard of our lives. It is our interest and honour to make good those professions; and we cannot doubt the success, without distrusting the best of causes.

Your Majesty is attended with every good presage. You have Ministers whose wisdom and integrity made them the objects of love and admiration to Europe; you have a General, of a name never mentioned but with that of victory; and you have Subjects who have wanted only him to lead them to conquest.

That

That your Majesty may always enjoy the glorious character of being the Father of your people, and the Friend of mankind, while all your faithful subjects contend to have it said of them that they lived and died Freemen, is the hearty prayer of,

Your Majesty's

Most faithful and most dutiful subjects.

296. TO SIR SAMUEL GARTH *.

SIR, [1715.]

AS soon as I thought of making the LOVER a present to one of my friends, I resolved, without farther distracting my choice, to send it TO THE BEST-NATURED MAN. You are so universally known for this character, that an epistle so directed would find its way to you without your name, and I believe nobody but you yourself would deliver such a superscription to any other person.

* Dr. Samuel Garth, the celebrated author of "The Dispensary."—The first edition of this admirable poem came out in 1694; and went through three impressions in a few months. This extraordinary encouragement put him upon making several improvements in it; and in 1706 he published a fourth edition, with several additions. Major Pack observes, that "The Dispensary had lost and gained in every edition; almost every thing that Sir Samuel left out being a robbery from the public, whilst every thing that he added was an embellishment to his poem." On the accession of King George I. he had the honour of being knighted with the Duke of Marlborough's sword. He died Jan. 18, 1718-19.

This propensity is the nearest a-kin to love; and good-nature is the worthiest affection of the mind, as love is the noblest passion of it: while the latter is wholly employed in endeavouring to make happy one single object, the other diffuses its benevolence to all the world.

As this is your natural bent, I cannot but congratulate to you the singular felicity that your profession is so agreeable to your temper. For what condition is more desirable than a constant impulse to relieve the distressed, and a capacity to administer that relief? When the sick man hangs his eye on that of his physician, how pleasing must it be to speak comfort to his anguish, to raise in him the first motions of hope, to lead him into a persuasion that he shall return to the company of his friends, the care of his family, and all the blessings of being?

The manner in which you practise this heavenly faculty of aiding human life, is according to the liberality of science, and demonstrates that your heart is more set upon doing good than growing rich.

The pitiful artifices which empiricks are guilty of to drain cash out of valetudinarians, are the abhorrence of your generous mind; and it is as common with Garth to supply indigent patients with money for food, as to receive it from wealthy ones for physick. How much more amiable, Sir, would the generosity which is already applauded by all that know you, appear to those whose gratitude you every day refuse, if they knew that you resist their presents, lest you should supply those whose wants

you

you know, by taking from those with whose necessities you are unacquainted!

The families you frequent receive you as their friend and well-wisher, whose concern in their behalf is as great as that of those who are related to them by the ties of blood and the sanctions of affinity. This tenderness interrupts the satisfactions of conversation, to which you are so happily turned; but we forgive you that our mirth is often insipid to you, while you sit absent to what passes amongst us from your care of such as languish in sickness. We are sensible their distresses, instead of being removed by company, return more strongly to your imagination by comparison of their condition to the jollities of health.

But I forget I am writing a Dedication*; and in an address of this kind, it is more usual to celebrate men's great talents, than those virtues to which such talents ought to be subservient; yet where the bent of a man's spirit is taken up in the application of his whole force to serve the world in his profession, it would be frivolous not to entertain him rather with thanks for what he is, than applauses for what he is capable of being. Besides, Sir, there is no room for saying any thing to you as you are a man of wit and a great poet; all that can be spoken that is worthy an ingenuous spirit, in the celebration of such faculties, has been incomparably said by yourself to others, or by others to you: you have never been excelled in this kind but by those who have written in praise of you: I will

* This was prefixed to an edition of "The Lover and Reader," in 12mo, 1715.

not

not pretend to be your rival even with such an advantage over you; but assuring you, in Mr. Codrington's words*, that I do not know whether my love or admiration is greater, I remain, Sir,

Your most faithful friend,
and most obliged humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

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297. ORIGINAL PREFACE†, by Sir RICHARD STEELE, to "THE DRUMMER," a Comedy by Mr. ADDISON.

HAVING recommended this Play to the Town, and delivered the copy of it to the Bookseller, I think myself obliged to give some account of it.

It had been some years in the hands of the Author‡; and, falling under my perusal, I thought so

* "Thou hast no faults, or I no faults can spy;
"Thou art all beauty, or all blindness I."
Codrington to Dr. Garth, before the Dispensary.

† See hereafter, a Letter to Mr. Congreve, dated in 1722.

‡ Dr. Johnson, in his Life of Addison, speaking of that elegant writer's share in the *Spectator*, &c. says, "Many of these papers were written with powers truly comic, with nice discrimination of characters, and accurate observation of natural or accidental deviation from propriety; but it was not supposed that he had tried a Comedy on the stage, till Steele after his death declared him the author of *The Drummer*. This, however, Steele did not know to be true by any direct testimony; for, when Addison put the play into his hands, he only told him,

well of it, that I persuaded him to make some additions and alterations to it, and let it appear upon the Stage. I own I was very highly pleased with it, and liked it the better for the want of those studied similies and repartees which we who have writ before him have thrown into our Plays, to indulge and gain upon a false taste that has prevailed for many years in the British Theatre. I believe the Author would have condescended to fall into this way a little more than he has, had he, before the writing of it, been often present at theatrical representations. I was confirmed in my thoughts [of the Play, by the opinion of better judges to whom it was communicated, who observed, that the scenes were drawn after Moliere's manner, and that an easy and natural vein of humour ran through the whole.

I do not question but the Reader will discover this, and see many beauties that escaped the Audience; the touches being too delicate for every taste in a popular assembly. My Brother Sharers * were of opinion, at the first reading of it, that it

him, it was the work of "a Gentleman in the Company;" and when it was received, as is confessed, with cold disapprobation, he was probably less willing to claim it. Tickell omitted it in his collection; but the testimony of Steele, and the total silence of any other claimant, has determined the publick to assign it to Addison; and it is now printed with his other poetry. Steele carried the *Drummer* to the play-house, and afterwards to the press, and sold the copy for fifty guineas."

* By a patent dated Jan. 19, 1714-15, Steele was appointed Governor of the Royal Company of Comedians; and, on a fair consideration, he admitted Cibber and Wilks to proportionate shares of the patent.

was

was like a picture in which the strokes were not strong enough to appear at a distance. As it is not in the common way of writing, the approbation was at first doubtful; but has risen every time it has been acted, and has given an opportunity in several of its parts for as just and good action as ever I saw on the Stage.

The Reader will consider that I speak here, not as *the Author*, but as the Patentee* ; which is perhaps the reason why I am not diffuse in the praises of the Play, lest I should seem like a man who cries up his own wares only to draw in customers.

RICH. STEELE †.

* See p. 391.

† It appears that, not long after the date of this Letter, Sir Richard Steele was a candidate for a very important office: "We hear that on Monday next, the Governors of Sutton's Hospital, called the Charter House, are to proceed to the choice of a Master, to succeed the learned Dr. Burnet lately deceased; and that, out of 12 voices, Sir Richard Steele will have 8, though he is a married man, and therefore said to be disqualified by the Founder's statutes: but this is to be done with a certain reservation, and not to be made a precedent at future Elections; though how such a sort of Ecclesiastical preferment is consistent with the Lay-office of being Superintendant of his Majesty's Company of Comedians, it is not very easy to determine. The other Candidate is Dr. John King." Weekly Packet, Saturday, Nov. 19, 1715.

298. TO

298. TO MR. HUGHES.

DEAR SIR, JAN. 8, 1715-16, ST. JAMES'S-STREET.

A PAPER called "The Town-talk*, is particularly designed to be helpful to the Stage. If you have not sent the mask †, which is to come out on Thursday, to press, if you please to send me the copy, it shall be recommended to the Town, and published on Thursday night with that paper. Your affectionate friend, and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

299. TO LADY STEELE,

HUMBLY PRESENT.

DEAR WIFE, JAN. 10, 1715-16.

I HAVE that in my pocket which within a few days will be a great sum of money, besides what is growing at the Play-house‡. I prefer your ease

* These Papers were first collected into a volume by the present Editor in 1790; as were "The Theatre" and "The Anti-Theatre" in 1791.

† "Apollo and Daphne," a masque by Mr. Hughes, set to music by Dr. Pepusch. See it in his "Poems," vol. II. p. 167. D.

‡ Which was then worth to him about a thousand pounds a year.

to

to all things. I beg of you to send for coals, and all things necessary for the week, and keep us only to the end of it out of your abundance; and I shall ever add to it hereafter, instead of attempting to diminish it. I cannot indeed get money immediately, without appearing most scandalously indigent, which I would avoid for the future.

Ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

300. TO LADY STEELE *.

BALDWIN'S, EAST-STREET,
NEAR RED-LION-STREET,

DEAR PRUE, JAN. 11, 1715-16.

I AM here very busy, and shall be all night. Pray send me a book which is upon the 'scrutore in the dining-room. It is an History of Ireland †, and many leaves of it turned down, and papers in it. It is a sad thing I must take such pains; but you are to be the better for it, which is the main comfort to, yours ever, RICH. STEELE.

* "Over-against Park-place, St. James's-street."

† This he wanted in compiling his Letter to the Pretender, in the Fifth Number of "The Town Talk."

301. TO LADY STEELE.

CHELSEA, MONDAY,
FEB. 14, 1715-16.

DEAR PRUE,

MR. FULLER * and I came hither to dine in the air; but the maid has been so slow, that we are benighted, and choose to lie here rather than go this road in the dark. I lie at *our own house*, and my friend at a relation's in the town.

I desire Willmot may come in the morning with my linen.

Your obedient husband, RICH. STEELE.

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302. PREFACE TO "THE ENGLISHMAN," vol. II.

THE former volume of *The Englishman* was written with a direct intention to destroy the credit, and frustrate the designs, of wicked men, at that time in power.

To insinuate that there are evil purposes in the Ministers of one's Country, is, in itself, a seditious and unwarrantable practice; but the apparent tendency of the proceedings in the late times justified

* One of Steele's assistants as a writer. See the Tatler, N° 205 *note*; where the curious reader will find a very honourable account of him. See also the Theatre, N° 26.

the

the disrespect with which the Officers of the State were then treated.

That volume alarmed mankind against their designs; and this lays together facts which must convince all the world of the methods they had taken to accomplish them.

It is incumbent upon one who had treated them so frankly when they were only suspected, to make good what he seemed to accuse them of, now their actions are brought to light.

There needs no apology for the liberty taken with their characters upon so good a foundation as the Report of a Committee of the House of Commons.

It is no matter to the Author of *The Englishman*, whether they are ever punished for what they have done, according to their deserts. He has done all he could to make them live in infamy; and, after that, he cares not how long they live.

But our Author's behaviour upon some late circumstances has been thought inconsistent with this spirit; and it has appeared unaccountable, that he who was thus violent against the Parricides, discovered, in a certain place, inclination to lenity towards the Rebels *.

* Steele was wont to express himself with smartness against the errors of men, without bitterness towards their persons. Mr. Whiston, a zealous Christian *sui generis*, in his "Memoirs," 2d edit. 1753, 2 vols. p. 257, *et seq.* with little judgment, and less gratitude, reproaches Steele, who was one of his most active benefactors, with *inconsistency*, for writing in "The Theatre" against the South Sea scheme, when it portended the mischeifs of which it was pregnant, and speaking in the House of Commons in recommendation of lenity to *the Directors*, after the

For very many reasons that matter is not to be resumed here; but, granting that he had declared for mercy, it might possibly be, that his heart failed against submissive criminals, though he has appeared determinate against triumphant wickedness. It ordinarily happens that the same men who make an attack very bravely upon troops in good order, do least execution upon them when they are put to flight, or ask quarter. But I never heard it said that they were the less zealous for the cause, or that they were held deserters from the service, because they have been over-run in pursuing a defeat, by their friends who were in the rear at the onset.

the mischiefs were produced; as if, forsooth, there was any incongruity between expressing detestation at a crime, and exercising humanity to a criminal. See Tatler, No 251, *notes*.—It seems, Sir Richard was in like manner reproached for advising lenity to the Rebels of 1715, after the Rebellion was entirely suppressed; though, ill pleased with the tameness of Addison's 'Freeholder,' he is reported to have said, that "Government had made choice of a *lute* on an occasion when they ought to have made use of a *trumpet*."

303. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MARCH 26, 1716.

I DID not come to town to-day; because I find my hand in, and, by the help of Dymock *, shall be able this evening to finish what I have deferred from day to day for two months last past. Lest you should be uneasy, I send Willmot to let you know that I shall not come home till to-morrow about eleven in the morning; and am,

Dear creature, absolutely thine,

RICH. STEELE.

304. TO LADY STEELE†.

DEAREST PRUE, [undated.]

THIS is only to ask how you do.

I am

Your-Betty-Dick-Eugene Molly's

Humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

* Steele's *amquensis*.

† This scrap is placed here most probably out of its proper order; a circumstance of no more importance than the letter itself, which is only preserved as enumerating all his family in a way that no man but himself would ever have thought of.

305. TO LADY STEELE,
WITH A CASE.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,
DEAR PRUE, AUG. 9, 1716.

YOU may observe, in those excellent books which your polite cousin * reads to you, that necessaries are often wanting to the heroes and heroines for want of stowing their portmanteaus with proper materials.

The bearer brings you, with this, a case of instruments for eating and drinking, that may be upon the road both of ornament and use to,

Madam,
Your obedient husband, RICH. STEELE.

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306. TO LADY STEELE †.

DEAR PRUE, SATURDAY, NOV. 17, 1716.

MOLLY's distemper proves the small-pox, which she has very favourably, and a good kind. Mrs. Evans is very good; and Nurse Jervase very diligent; Sarah has every good quality; and the whole family are in health beside the dear infant.

* Alexander Scurlock, son to a brother of Lady Steele's father. See Letter 309. &c.

† "At Carmarthen, South Wales."

I am

I am very close at my papers, not having been two hours out of the house since I parted with you. Pray take care of yourself. I love you to distraction; for I cannot be angry at any thing you do, let it be ever so odd and unexpected, to the tenderest of husbands,

RICH. STEELE.

We had not, when you left us, an inch of candle, a pound of coal, or a bit of meat, in the house; but we do not want now.

R. S.

307. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, NOV. 20, 1716.

I AM here under the double severity of your absence and Molly's sickness; but I hope you are well, as the child is, in her condition. She has the small-pox with very favourable symptoms, and is very well attended by Evans and her husband, Sarah, and Nurse Jervase.

I hope to begin my journey * the day after Willmot's return.

* June 7, 1716, Sir Richard Steele had been joined in a commission, with George Treby, Arthur Ingram, William Gregory, esqrs. Sir Henry Houghton, John Holden, esq. Sir Thomas Hales, Robert Monroe, Henry Cuningham, Denis Bond, esqrs. Mr. Serjeant Birch, and Mr. John Eyles, to enquire into the Estates of Traitors and Popish Recusants.—This carried him first into Preston, and afterward to Scotland; where, how unwelcome a guest soever he might be to the generality, yet he received from several of the nobility and gentry the most distinguishing marks of respect,

I am, with the utmost affection, your obedient husband, and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

I opened this after sealed, to let you know Willmot is come.

respect, insomuch that he began to turn his thoughts upon the much-to-be desired, but hopeless, project of perfecting the Union between the two kingdoms, by extending it to the policy of Church as well as State. In this view he had frequent conversations with some of the Presbyterian Ministers, concerning the restoration of Episcopacy, the antient Church-government of that Nation; and often lamented this division in the Ecclesiastical Administration, which still serves to maintain a kind of alienation between the people. Sir Richard wished well to the interests of Religion; and, as he imagined that Union would promote it, he had some thoughts of proposing it at Court; but that, as was likely, proved abortive.—Among these Scotch Ministers was one Hart, with whom Sir Richard commenced a friendship, and afterwards honoured him with his correspondence. This Hart he used to style "the Hangman of the Gospel;" for, though he was a facetious, good-natured man, yet he had fallen into a peculiar way of preaching what he called "the Terrors of the Law," and denounced anathemas from the pulpit without reserve.—Our Knight also, during his stay in Scotland, indulged his genius in searching into the humours of low life; in which view he prepared a splendid feast at Edinburgh, and ordered his servants to pick up all the beggars and poor people they could find in the streets for their guests. The servants obeyed; and Sir Richard soon saw himself at the head of forty or fifty beggars, together with some poor decayed tradesmen. After dinner he plied them with punch and wine; and when the frolick was ended, he declared, that besides the pleasure of filling so many empty bellies, he had learned humour enough to make a good Comedy. (Shiels's Lives of the Poets, vol. IV. p. 118.)

308. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, NOV. 26, 1716.

I HOPE this will find you safe at Carmarthen, and that you find all things easy there. There is nothing extraordinary has occurred here. Your daughter Betty was very well yesterday: I made her be brought out as I rode by.

I have been much on horseback, to prepare for my journey, for which I expect orders on Monday next out of Scotland. This is the ninth day with my dear Molly in the small-pox; she has many in the body, few in the face: they are, they say, very kindly. Nurse Jervase, with her duty, recommends herself to you for her extraordinary care and diligence about your child. Mrs. Evans and her husband deserve very well of us.

I am, with the tenderest love,

Your most obedient husband,
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

My most humble service to the widow, and all the family.

309. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, NOV. 27, 1716.

I WRIT to my cousin Alexander this post, and desired him to excuse my not writing to you; but, on second thoughts, fearing you might be displeased, I send this, though it has only to say that I am, with entire love and duty,

Your most obedient husband,
and humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

---

310. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, NOV. 29, 1716.

I AM extremely obliged to you for your letter on the reverse of my cousin's. Your indisposition is a very great grief to me. I desire you to use brandy to bathe your head, till you hear Dr. Garth's advice by next post. Betty is very well, and Molly up, and has this day taken physick, which shall be continued as much as proper, and at proper distances. I have a great packet to answer from Scotland, of which you shall have a farther account in my next.

I am devotedly yours, RICH. STEELE.

311. TO LADY STEELE*.

DEAR PRUE, DEC. 6, 1716.

THIS is only to say we are all well. Among other little matters, I wait an answer from you before I set out for Scotland.

I am, dear Prue, faithfully thine,

RICH. STEELE.

Garth advises your washing your head with water and salt.

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312. TO LADY STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,

DEAR PRUE, DEC. 11, 1716.

I HAVE received yours, with the inclosed bill for fifty pounds. I earnestly intreat you not to excruciate your spirit with what you ought to overlook and despise. I will write to you at large on Thursday about all matters, especially the method of my journey.

I am, dear woman, entirely yours,

RICH. STEELE.

* "At Carmarthen, South Wales. Frank, *Richard Steele.*"

313. TO LADY STEELE.

MY DEAR PRUE, DEC. 13, 1716.

MRS. *Secretary Bevans* * has acquainted me, by the 7th instant, that you are well, and very much my friend and servant. Mrs. Evans went to see Betty yesterday, who, she says, is grown a very fine lady. Moll sat by me a little as I was writing yesterday; she will not be at all marked, but is a dear child. Eugene is grown a very lively gentleman. After all this news, which takes in all the compass of whatever you care for †, you will not much regard politicks if I should write any. But it seems my Lord Townshend is out, and Stanhope and Methuen the two Secretaries for England, and Duke Roxborough ‡ made a third Secretary for Scotland; for which place I intend to set out this day, with an opportunity of a gentleman's coach going down.

I am, dear Prue, your most affectionate,
obedient, languishing relict,

RICH. STEELE.

The machine is almost ready.

* Sister to Lady Steele's mother. She was at this time a widow. See Letter 308, *ad finem.*

† By this expression it appears their first boy Dick (see pp. 204, 240, 324) was now dead. Eugene died in November 1723.

‡ John Ker, Duke of Roxborough, was appointed secretary for North-Britain, Dec. 16, 1716. He resigned that office, Aug. 25, 1725; and since that period, instead of a distinct Secretary of State for Scotland, there has been regularly a Keeper of the Signet under the other two Secretaries.

314. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, DEC. 18, 1716.

WHETHER I love you because you are the mother of the children, or them because you are their mother, I know not; but I am sure I am growing a very covetous creature for the sake of both of you. I am making haste to Scotland; have only a small affair, which I will acquaint you with in my next; and am, entirely yours, RICH. STEELE.

---

315. TO LADY STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,

DEAR PRUE, DEC. 20, 1716.

MRS. SECRETARY * writes me word you have a curiosity to know what bustle it was that you heard of at the Playhouse. It was occasioned by a gentleman's coming in very rough, in a riding-habit; and the sentry enquiring of him where he was going, as he offered to pass into a box, he told him, if he opposed his passage he would shoot him through the head. The soldier was the more alarmed at him, and persisted to deny him entrance; at which the stranger pulled out a pistol, and shot the man in the neck. He was seized, and several

* Mrs. Bevans. See p. 405.

pistols

pistols found about him, and proves one Mr. Freeman, a madman. The house was in a very great uproar, crying out *The Prince!* who only appeared indifferent and composed *.

I long to be gone from hence. The children are all well.

I am, dear Prue, ever thine, RICH. STEELE.

Your man Sam owes me three-pence, which must be deducted in the account between you and me; therefore, pray take care to get it in, or stop it †.

* The strange circumstance here alluded to happened at Drury-lane theatre on the 6th of December, 1716, when the Prince of Wales was present at the tragedy of Tamerlane. A particular account of the whole transaction, of which Steele has here given his Lady a good abstract, is in the "Political State," vol. XII. p. 547. Mr. Freeman was a gantleman of Surrey, and had for several years been troubled with fits of lunacy. Though the soldier's wounds did not prove mortal, Mr. Freeman was committed to Newgate, on the additional charge of having killed a man in the country two days before.

† A sneer at Lady Steele's excessive attention to money. See Letter 317, and Letter 294, and *note*.

316. TO

316. TO LADY STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,

DEAR PRUE, DEC. 22, 1716.

THIS wishes you an agreeable Christmas. I have taken such care, as to be as easy on the road * as travelling about this town. I am dear Prue, with the sincerest passion, ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

---

317. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, CHRISTMAS-DAY.

I WENT the other day to see Betty at Chelsea, who represented to me, in her pretty language, "that she seemed helpless and friendless, without any body's taking notice of her at Christmas, when all the children but she and two more were with their relations." I have invited her to dinner to-day, with one of the teachers; and they are here now in the room; Betty and Moll very noisy and pleased together. Bess goes back again, as soon as she has dined, to Chelsea. I have stayed in, to get a very advantageous affair dispatched; for, I assure you, I love money at present as well as your Ladyship; and am entirely yours,

RICH. STEELE.

* In his journey to Scotland.

I told

I told Betty I had writ to you; and she made me open the letter again, and give her humble duty to her mother, and desire to know when she shall have the honour to see her in town. She gives her love to Mrs. Bevans and all her cousins.

318. TO LADY STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,
DEAR PRUE, DEC. 28, 1716.

IT is matter of gain, not matter of gallantry, keeps me here thus long, I hope, within a post or two, to give an account of a thing that will bring us a great sum of money *.

All my endeavours and thoughts tend only to extricate my condition, and have no debt but that to a good wife and a few dear innocents.

I am, dear Prue, eternally thine,

RICH. STEELE.

The King leaves Hanover the 4th of January, our style.

* A contrivance of a machine for bringing fish to London; of which a more particular account will be given in some of the subsequent Letters.

319. From

319. From the EDITOR of "A Lady's Travels* into Spain, 1716," to Sir RICHARD STEELE.

SIR, [1716.]

THE reputation you have obtained in the world, for learning, wit, good sense, and a general knowledge of mankind, very much exposes you to addresses of this nature.

I should hardly presume to press in with this little work, amongst the many who seek to shadow their labours under your patronage, but that I think the ingenious productions of the fair sex have a particular claim to it. You shew, in several of your writings, a special regard to the improvement of that sex in the politer part of knowledge, by endeavouring to rescue them from the prejudices of a narrow education, and to enlarge their notions of things. The example this lady affords them of wit, judgment, and capacity, may excite the emulation of some, and concur with your motives to answer that end. This reason, together with the assurances I have of your readiness to encourage such works as have a tendency to inform the judgments, or improve any of the virtues of mankind, makes me flatter myself you will give shelter to a new edition of this. I need not say much as to the judicious

* This entertaining little work, written originally by Madam Daunois, passed through some editions before this Dedication was prefixed to it, and has also been since then re-printed by Mr. T. Davies. It was one of the first books that gave any true account of Spain.

performance

performance of it; you will easily perceive the observations she has made upon the humours of the Spaniard to be very just; the dress she has put them in, elegant and neat; and her expression familiar, easy and clear.

The former impressions of this book have been very well received in the world; and I doubt not but this will meet with a better reception than any yet have done, by coming into it under your protection. Whatever you espouse comes sufficiently recommended, and, with those that know you, will be taken for a convincing argument of its own merit. I cannot persuade myself silently to pass over one motive which swayed very much with me to make you this address; and that is, a desire I have long entertained for an opportunity to declare the veneration and esteem I have for you as a gentleman, a scholar, and a patriot. The two first characters you enjoy undisturbed; and, to make good the last, you have the applauses of all true Britons, for the vigorous efforts you made against the late attacks upon the liberties of your country, by exposing the false reasonings of those men who would have deluded us into a fatal security, till Popery and Tyranny had come down upon us like a mighty torrent, and overwhelmed us.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant.

320. TO LADY STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,

DEAR, DEAR PRUE, JAN. 1, 1716-17.

I WISH you from my soul an happy new year, and many, very different from what we have hitherto had. In order thereunto, I have taken a resolution, which, by the blessing of God, I will stedfastly keep, to make my children partners with me in all my future gain, in the manner I have before described to you. That you may be convinced of this happy change, you shall be yourself the keeper of what I lay up for them, by quarterly portions from this day.

I am, with the tenderest affection,
Your faithful husband, and most humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

Your children are all very well.

321. TO LADY STEELE.

THURSDAY, ST. JAMES'S-STREET,

DEAR PRUE, JAN. 3, 1716-17.

I HAVE the pleasure to acquaint you that Gillmore's work* is just finished; and that there are some little matters besides, which will forthwith highly conduce to the good of you and your little

* See Letter 318.

ones.

ones. The Courtiers are in a very great hurry, which cannot be composed till the King comes*.

The order for the pay of our Commission† lies before the Treasury; when that is signed, I shall leave the town, though but to go and come from Scotland. Ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

You may be sure I mean to return by way of Carmarthen.

322. TO LADY STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,

DEAR PRUE, JAN. 4, 1716-17.

I HAVE received your long letter, for which I thank you, and will punctually observe the directions. I have answered concerning my cousin Griffith to Mr. Madocks, because you, being unacquainted with the methods of the University, would not have comprehended what I mean. You will find Jonathan provided for in a short time. Every tittle shall be observed as you directed.

I am your most obedient and affectionate husband,

RICH. STEELE.

You are utterly mistaken in your suspicion of my having borrowed of my cousin; there is indeed no such thing directly or indirectly.

* Who was then at Hanover.

† See p. 400.

323. TO

323. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JAN. 8, 1716-17.

FORGIVE me that I can say no more now than just to tell you we are well; and am, with all truth, your faithful, DICK STEELE.

324. TO LADY STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,

DEAR PRUE, JAN. 10, 1716-17.

I HAVE some matters of profit now on the anvil, which I cannot be able to explain till Tuesday's post, at which time you shall have a full account; but, between that and this, little more than to tell you I am alive, and while so inviolably thine,

RICH. STEELE.

325. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JAN. 12, 1716-17.

I HAVE yours of last post without a date; and shall, in every particular, govern myself as you direct. You know you are next week to have particulars

ticulars concerning all the present views of, Madam, your most affectionate husband, and most devoted humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

Our little people are very lively and well.

326. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JAN. 17, 1716-17.

I HAVE yours on a leaf of the widow's. If you knew how deeply it touches me, you would not write in such a scornful and unkind style to, Madam, your most affectionate, obedient husband,

RICH. STEELE.

327. TO LADY STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,

DEAR PRUE, JAN. 19, 1716-17.

I HAVE prepared the letter for Morgan Davies, &c.; but they are at home, and I am at Court, and cannot go to my own house till too late for the post. You shall have all your commands spoken to next post. The King came hither about five o'clock.

I am, dear Prue, eternally yours,

RICH. STEELE.

328. TO

328. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [undated.]

I HAVE yours, and, if I have ever offended you, am heartily sorry for it, and beg your pardon. As to the next circumstance, the world is all alike every where; and I know no occasion for expecting great friendship, and disinterested conduct; but maintain a discreet and distant correspondence, at the same time always ready to do what good one can to relations, without thinking of what return they will make. I do, as you advise, court and converse with men able and willing to serve me. But, after this, you grow very pleasant, and talk of 800*l.* Please to shew me in your next how you make out such a demand upon me, and you shall have my serious answer to it. Your words are, "the full 800*l.* you owe me." You advise me to take care of my soul; I do not know what you can think of yours, when you have and do with-hold from me your body.

I observe what you say of cousin Alexander, and shall be glad of his correspondence. I have not yet had any money as a Commissioner; but shall next week, and then will pay Betty's schooling, &c.

I inclose to you a letter from Morgan Davies, with my answer on the back. I believe you had better conceal that. I send you his letter: you may be sure he shall have no consent of mine separate from yours, for you rule me entirely.

Your most obedient, humble husband and servant, RICH. STEELE.

329. TO

329. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, FEB. 5, 1716-17.

I WRITE without having any thing new to say. I am going to be very easy, God be thanked, in my affairs; to throw off all hangers-on; put my debts in a regular way of payment, which I cannot immediately discharge; and try to behave myself with the utmost circumspection and prudence in all the duties of life; especially of being, dear Prue, your most obliged husband, and obedient humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

330. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, FEB. 9, 1716-17.

I SHALL observe your directions concerning Dick Philips; but it gives me great indignation to observe that you are forced to go to law for the balance of your accompt. I hope you take care of your health, and let nothing discompose you, that, when we meet, we may have healthy bodies and easy minds, and enjoy the comforts of life with tranquillity.

I am ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

331. TO LADY STEELE*.

DEAR PRUE, FEB. 16, 1716-17.

SOBER or not, I am ever yours,

RICH. STEELE †.

332. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, FEB. 23, 1716-17.

I HAVE not any thing particular to say to-night, but that I am informed there will be, within a few days, farther changes at Court. Your children are all very well. I wait with great impatience for the receipt of my money. There is forfeited money in town, but it is not yet in the Exchequer.

I am, dear Prue, ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

* "At Carmarthen, South Wales. Frank, Richard Steele."

† This scrap, if it serves no other purpose, is at least a proof of the Writer's affection.

333. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, FEB. 28, 1716-17.

I AM very well pleased with the behaviour of *David* * at Oxford, who has rendered himself very agreeable to all the Whig world, on a very proper occasion, at Oxon. He spoke contemptibly of the Pretender in a public speech, and the Proctor thought fit to reprove him thereupon. The Bishop of Bangor † takes occasion to espouse him in this juncture.

* David Scurlock, B. A. of Jesus College, Oxford; where he took the degree of M. A. May 10, 1717; one of the lecturers of Hackney, and vicar of Waltham St. Lawrence, Berks; preferred to Pottern, Wilts, in June 1726. He published seven single Sermons between 1720 and 1748; one of which, preached at Wallingford, at an election of a Burgess to serve in Parliament, 1719-20, was printed, under the title of "Public Virtue the only Preservative of Liberty and Property; or, Slavery the natural Consequence of Avarice and Corruption; dedicated to Sir Richard Steele, Knt." For a Sermon which he preached at St. Paul's, 1733, at the time the General Excise Bill was in agitation, "On speaking Evil of Governors," he received the personal thanks of Sir Robert Walpole; and in November 1733 appeared, "A Letter of Advice to the Rev. Mr. Scurlock, occasioned by his extraordinary Sermon, preached the 7th of October at St. Paul's. By a sturdy Beggar, Citizen and Merchant of London." He died Aug. 21, 1768.

† The following memorandum is transcribed from the handwriting of Dr. Hoadly, when Bishop of Bangor. Mr. Scurlock having, in 1720, stood candidate for a City lectureship, the Bishop recommends him thus: "The good character I have heard of Mr. Scurlock from many very worthy and respectable persons, joined to my own personal knowledge of him, induce me to recommend him to the parishioners of St. Peter le Poor. "BENJAMIN BANGOR, March 21, 1720."

Your daughter Moll is noisy, Betty very grave, and Eugene very strong and lusty.

We are not yet paid a farthing; when we are, I shall send you down a receipt for Betty's schooling.

Ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

334. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MARCH 2, 1716-17.

I USUALLY write to you the first thing I do on a post-day; but to-day company came in, and made me neglect it. Afterwards I was called abroad; then came home, and Budgell *, Benson †, and Fuller ‡, came in upon me to dinner. The two last stayed till the evening; and Fuller carried me with him to the Play, from whence I am now returned home. Your friend Keck § was the finest, gayest figure there, and Captain Ferrers gallantly attending behind her.

All your family is well. Good-night.

I am, dear Prue, ever thine,

RICH. STEELE.

* Eustace Budgell.

† William Benson, esq. Auditor of the Imprest.

‡ See p. 395, *note*.

§ This lady proved herself an excellent friend to one of Steele's daughters, as appears from some subsequent Letters.

335. TO

335. TO LADY STEELE.

MY DEAREST PRUE,
AND BELOVED WIFE, &c. [undated.]

I HAVE yours of the 7th instant, which turns wholly upon my taking care of my health, and advice to forbear embarking too deeply in public matters; which you enforce by reminding me of the ingratitude I have met with. I have as quick a sense of the ill-treatment I have received as is consistent with keeping up my own spirit and good-humour. Whenever I am a malcontent, I will take care not to be a gloomy one; but hope to keep some stings of wit and humour in my own defence. I am talking to my wife, and therefore may speak my heart, and the vanity of it. I know, and you are witness, that I have served the Royal Family with an unreservedness due only to Heaven, and I am now (I thank my Brother Whigs) not possessed of twenty-shillings from the favour of the Court. The Playhouse it had been barbarity to deny at the Players' request; and therefore I do not allow it a favour. But I banish the very memory of these things; nor will I expect any thing but what I must strike out of myself.

By Tuesday's post I think I shall be able to guess when I shall leave the town, and turn all my thoughts to finish my Comedy*. You will find I have got

* If this was his "Conscious Lovers," it remained unfinished till 1721.

so much constancy and fortitude as to live my own way (within the rules of good-breeding and decency) where-ever I am; for I will not sacrifice your husband, and the father of the poor babes, to any one's humour in the world. But to provide for and do you good, is all my ambition.

I have a list of 21 leases for the setting out 199*l.* 8*s.* *per annum.* I have not yet heard of Mr. Philips.

I am, dear Prue, ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

336. TO LADY STEELE.

HAMPTON-COURT,
MARCH 16, 1716-17.

DEAR PRUE,

IF you have written any thing to me which I should have received last night, I beg your pardon that I cannot answer till the next post. The House of Commons will be very busy the next week; and I had many things, public and private, for which I wanted four-and-twenty hours retirement, and therefore came to visit your son. I came out of town yesterday, being Friday, and shall return to-morrow. Your son, at the present writing, is mighty well employed, in tumbling on the floor of the room, and sweeping the sand with a feather. He grows a most delightful child, and very full of play and spirit. He is also a very great scholar: he can read his Primer; and I have brought down my Virgil.

He

He makes most shrewd remarks upon the pictures. We are very intimate friends and play-fellows. He begins to be very ragged; and I hope I shall be pardoned if I equip him with new cloaths and frocks, or what Mrs. Evans and I shall think for his service.

I am, dear Prue, ever yours,

RICH. STEELE.

337. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MARCH 19, 1716-17.

MR. RICHARD PHILIPS was with me this morning; and I signed the leases, to which I saw your hand. This day has been a great affair in the House of Commons. Mr. Walpole, in very clear and excellent terms, laid before us the state of the Debt of the Nation; and proposed a way, by lowering the interest given to the creditors of the kingdom, and other methods, to ease our circumstances. I happened to be the only man in the House who spoke against it*, because I did not think the way of doing it just. I believe the scheme will take place; and, if it does, Walpole must be a very great man.

I am very well pleased with the prospect from Mr. Gillmore's design; and, from the integrity of

* This is confirmed by the account of the debate in the "Political State" for March 1716-17.

my

my intentions in all my actions, in great tranquillity of mind. I contract my sails every day; and, when I receive my money, shall be in such a way as will shew that you and my little ones are all my sincere delight.

I am, dear Prue, ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

338. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, FEB. 25, 1716-17.

THIS goes to dear Prue, to comfort her in her absence from her husband. If she thinks the distance as painful as he does, hearing from him must be a great satisfaction. I am sure, as soon as I have made my affairs so easy as that we can be together without being interrupted with worldly care, I shall put an end to the distance between us. I every day do something towards this, and next week shall pay off Madam Dawson. You shall have, within a few days, a state of my circumstances, the prospect of bettering them, and the progress I have already made in this necessary work. The children do come on so well, that it would make even me covetous to put them in a condition equal to the good genius, I bless God, they seem to be of. Moll is the noisiest little creature in the world, and as active as a boy. Madam Betty is the gravest of matrons in her airs and civilities. Eugene, a most beautiful and lusty child.

The

The Parliament goes on but coldly; but I hope there is a warmer spirit will soon appear in the service of this Nation, which, possessed of the most solid blessings, sacrifices itself to trifles.

Yours ever, RICH. STEELE.

339. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [undated.]

YOURS of the 18th lies before me; and I am convinced that *generous* in my carriage should rather be, what you call it, *thoughtless*. As for the company I am to meet with, I shall maintain a general complaisance, and think the sincerity of speaking all one thinks a great insult and injury towards the rest of the world. I assure you, we will have no quarrels on that score; for, as I owe every body civility, so I owe you to go on your own way; nor will I debate with you on these subjects, but proceed in *my* own way. To shew you that I am grown a very hard-hearted fellow, and fit for this world, Mrs. Long * has been arrested; and I have, upon her application, refused to concern myself in her affairs. It was, I think, a little confident in her to ask it of me; and, in such cases, I think I

* It might have been supposed that this was the celebrated Beauty recorded among the Kit-cat toasts, who retired from the world on account of pecuniary distress; but it appears that she died at Lynn, Dec. 21, 1711. See Swift's Works, 1808, vol. XV. p. 213.

may

may be as bold to deny unreasonable things, as they are to ask them.

The Lords of the Treasury have ordered us some money, and I shall husband it to the best advantage, to keep above this ill-natured world; but it is a terrible circumsitance to have one's money due to others before it comes into one's own hands.

Dick Philips has been here to-day; and, after we had dined, I executed the leases. I am highly pleased and satisfied with your conduct; and think you come up to the description in the Proverbs *, of the good woman, of whom it is said, that her husband shall be honoured from her character. I do assure you, I am not ashamed to tell you, that I submit my conduct to the imitation of yours, and shall take you with me in all matters of concern. You are to know, that I have been casting about how to turn a kind inclination towards me at present into what is solid. There is an estate forfeited to the King, of 100*l.* a year, by one who died for murder. It is a thing I have come to the knowledge of by the bye; and believe I shall have a grant of it, to help me out of the inconveniencies my zeal brought upon me, and I have not yet recovered. One does not know what fate any letter may meet with; therefore I can never find in my heart to commit secrets to paper. But take it for granted, I shall hereafter shew very little romance in the temper and conduct of, dear Prue,

Your most affectionate husband,
and most obedient servant,

RICH. STEELE.

* Chap. xxi. 23.

340. TO

340. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [undated.]

I HAVE yours, wherein you mention Fuller, and the account you have that he shewed an insolent joy at his wife's death. I do not set up to excuse his conduct towards his wife, but shall take care of mine towards my own.

You tell me you want a little flattery from me. I assure you I know no one who deserves so much commendation as yourself, and to whom saying the best things would be so little like flattery. The thing speaks itself, considering you as a very handsome woman that loves retirement, one who does not want wit, and yet is extremely sincere; and so I could go through all the vices which attend the good qualities of other people, of which you are exempt. But, indeed, though you have every perfection, you have one extravagant fault, which almost frustrates the good in you to me; and that is, that you do not love to dress, to appear, to shine out, even at my request, and to make me proud of you, or rather to indulge the pride I have that you are mine. This is all I wish changed in you; which I hope you will bring about, and condescend to be, what Nature made you, the most beauteous and most agreeable of your sex, at the instance of, dear Prue,

Your most affectionate, obsequious husband,

RICH. STEELE.

A quarter of Molly's schooling is paid.

The children are perfectly well.

341. TO

341. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MARCH 23, 1716-17.

I WRITE by your order, though I have nothing new. My money is not yet come to hand; and I am very impatient for it, because I would shew you, as soon as it is in my power, a reformation in the management of expence. I am, dear Prue,

Your most obedient, obliged husband,

RICH. STEELE.

342. TO LADY STEELE.

MY DEAREST PRUE, MARCH 26, 1717.

I HAVE received yours, wherein you give me the sensible affliction of letting me know of the continual pain in your head. I could not meet with necessary advice; but, according to the description you give me, I am confident washing your head in cold water will cure you; I mean, having water poured on your head, and rubbed with an hand, from the crown of your head to the nape of your neck. When I lay in your place, and on your pillow, I assure you, I fell into tears last night, to think that my charming little insolent might be then awake and in pain; and took it to be a sin to go to sleep.

For

For this tender passion towards you, I must be contented that your *Prueship* will condescend to call yourself my well-wisher. I am going abroad, and write before I go out, lest accidents should happen to prevent my writing at all. If I can meet with farther advice for you, I will send it in a letter to Alexander. I am,

Dear Prue, ever thine, RICH. STEELE.

343. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MARCH 30, 1717.

THE omission of last post was occasioned by my attendance on the Duke of Newcastle, who was in the chair at the Kit-cat. Be so good as to forgive me. We have not yet one shilling from the Commission, though 750*l.* is become due; nor indeed know we when to expect it. I hope, however, within few days to take up as much money as will pay off all hangers-on, and to have no more for the future. I pant for leisure and tranquillity, which I hope to enjoy when we meet again. I am,

Dear Prue,

Your most obedient, affectionate,
faithful husband, RICH. STEELE.

344. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, APRIL 2, 1717.

I AM just come from a Parliamentary Club; and can only say all your family is well, especially he who is ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

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345. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, APRIL 9, 1717.

I WRITE, according to your advice, before I go out in the morning; and indeed the House of Commons *sit so late*, that what with that, and being *carried off to dinner* *, one is apt to run into the expence of the whole day, without having an hour to send to one's best friend. I gave Mrs. Evans the part of your letter, but there is no occasion for that caution; the child, in her eyes, and every where else, is in perfect good health. God be thanked, the rest are in the same condition; and we want nothing here but the receipt of money. I dined yesterday in Chancery-lane; and, after dinner, visited Mr. Keck, who is very well, and much your Ladyship's servant. Keep up your spirit; and let us live like a man and woman that love when we next meet. I embrace you; and am

Your most affectionate, and most obliged
humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

* What would Sir Richard have said to the present hours of sitting and of dining?

346. TO

346. TO LADY STEELE *.

DEAR PRUE, [undated.]

I AM, as you observe, still in town, and have your rallying letter. The claims of the fair sex are, you say, unaccountable. It is well for you they are; for, I assure you, I think you both the fairest and the best of women.

I have been much at home and alone since we parted. I am come to a resolution of making my three children my *partners;* and will constantly lay up something out of all receipts of money for each of them, in a box bearing the name of the little one to whom it belongs.

Betty grows tall, and has the best air I ever saw in any creature of her age.

I am going to dine with the Speaker. Things at Court seem to be in a very uncertain way.

I am, dear Prue, eternally yours,

RICH. STEELE.

* "At Carmarthen, South Wales." Frank, *Richard Steele.*

347. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, APRIL 10, 1717.

IT is now Wednesday; and, meeting with your letter, I write now, lest I should not have leisure to-morrow, when our Board are to meet very early. Now as to your letter. You say I am reported a Tory. You know I have always an unfashionable thing, called Conscience, in all matters of judicature or justice. There happened, a little while ago, a Petition to be brought into the House of Commons from the Roman-catholics, praying relief as to point of time, and the meaning of certain clauses which affected them. When there was a question just ready to be put upon this, as whether it should be rejected or not, I stood up, and said to this purpose:

"Mr. Speaker,

"I cannot but be of opinion, that to put severities upon men merely on account of Religion is a most grievous and unwarrantable proceeding. But, indeed, the Roman-catholics hold tenets which are inconsistent with the being and safety of a Protestant people; for this reason we are justified in laying upon them the penalties which the Parliament has from time to time thought fit to inflict: but, Sir, let us not pursue Roman-catholics with the spirit of Roman-catholics, but act towards them with the temper of our own Religion. If we do so, we shall not expect them to do any thing in less time

time than is necessary to do it, or to conduct themselves by rules which they do not understand," &c.

When I had adventured to say this, others followed; and there is a Bill directed for the relief of the petitioners. I suppose this gave an handle to the fame of my being a Tory; but you may, perhaps, by this time, have heard that I am turned Presbyterian; for the same day, in a meeting of a hundred Parliament men, I laboured as much for the Protestant Dissenters.

—Now for the news. Mr. Walpole, Mr. Methuen, and Mr. Pulteney, have resigned their offices. Mr. Stanhope is to go into the Treasury. Mr. Addison and Lord Sunderland are to be Secretaries of State. Lord Townshend is removed from Lord-lieutenant of Ireland; he is to be succeeded by the Duke of Bolton: and the Duke of Newcastle to be Lord-chamberlain. We have got no money.

I recover very fast of my gouty lameness; and, now I am in a better way, I own to you I have had a sad time, scarce ever well of the gout since we parted.

The children and all your family are well. God bless you. RICH. STEELE.

As soon as I have money, I will have Pall-Mall searched for a house.

348. TO LADY STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S,

DEAR PRUE, APRIL 13, 1717.

WE are here all well. They tell me I shall be *something* in the new changes; but what, I know not, nor do I care [but] as it may make me with more comfort and pleasure

Your most obedient servant,
and loving husband, RICH. STEELE.

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349. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, APRIL 16, 1717.

I DINED this day with Mr. Secretary Addison, who received the seals of office last night.

The employment of Commissioner, by the act which constitutes the commission, forbids my having any other office. But I am not out of humour, &c. I am,

Your most affectionate, obedient husband,
RICH. STEELE.

350. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [undated.]

I HAD a letter from Mr. Scurlock, coolly saying, you ordered him to let me know you were indisposed, and could not write.

I expect more fondness; and that you say, at least, some kind thing to me under your own hand every post. The Lords of the Treasury, when they went out of their post, ordered half-a-year's salary to our Commission; and when that comes out of the managers' hands, from the estates forfeited, we shall be paid; and that, I believe, will be about a fortnight hence. In the mean time, I want it sorely, to pay off many things, and keep something by me, if ever I can bring myself to that œconomy.

You have the kindest of husbands,

RICH. STEELE.

I am very lame, but in good health otherwise.

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351. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, APRIL 19, 1717.

YOUR family and children are in good health. We have half-a-year's salary ordered to our Commission, which will be paid as soon as our Country

Receivers can remit it out of Lancashire; which is all that at present occurs to, Madam,

Your most obsequious, faithful husband,

RICH. STEELE.

352. TO LADY STEELE.

MY DEAR PRUE, APRIL 22, 1717.

I HAVE yours, which is full of good sense, and shews in you a true greatness of mind. But at the same time that, according to your advice, I shun all engagements which may ensnare my integrity, I am to seek all occasions of profit that are consistent with it. Little Molly, who is in the house with me, is a constant dun to get money; for it gives my imagination the severest wound when I consider that she, or any of my dear innocents, with nothing but their mere innocence to plead for them, should be exposed to that world, which would not so much as repair the losses and sufferings of their poor father, after all his zeal and supererogatory service. You say well, "it will be well for them to have it to say their father kept his integrity;" but if they say, at the same instant, he left us competent estates, it will be so far from lessening, that it will advance his character. But I shall not spend much time to convince you that it is a good thing to get money, but solemnly promise you I will no more omit any fair opportunity of doing it.

You

You writ to me some time ago to order you a news-paper; I have done so, and the letter from the Secretary's office also will come every post to you.

The scene of business will be very warm at the next session; but my lesson is so short (that of following my conscience), that I shall go through the storm without losing a wink of sleep. I have told you, in a former letter, that ever since you went I have been almost as great a cripple as your dear mother was *; and indeed I recover mighty slowly. I take your advice of temperance; and am, with my whole heart,

Yours for ever, RICH. STEELE.

Mr. Gillmore's affair is quite finished with great success, insomuch that Sir Isaac Newton is desirous the machine may stand at his house, and be carried from thence to the Parliament. Benson, Gillmore, and I, meet to-morrow, to concert all matters relating to it against the House of Commons meet again, which is on the 6th of May.

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353. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [undated.]

I HAVE yours, with your advice against temptation, &c. All I can aver is, that I have learned a language, and written a book, to keep me out of

* This is the first intimation of Mrs. Scurlock's death.

vanities.

vanities *. All shall be done as fast as I can. You have here inclosed what you directed I should send for Morgan Davies.

Thus far I writ on Saturday last; but went to Mrs. Clayton's †, and, with some people there, went to Court, and was detained so as not to be able to get away to dispatch my letter to you, for which I beg your pardon. If I do not do my business just now, I must be contented to go on in the beaten dull road, and aim no more at lively strokes. Oh, Prue, you are very unkind in writing in so cool a strain, to the warmest, tenderest heart that ever woman commanded. I am, dear Prue,

Your most obedient husband,
and most humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

I have directed the cream of tartar "To Mr. Alexander Scurlock."

354. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 1717.

I HAVE a letter from your Secretary ‡, intimating you were going to see the entry of the Judges,

* Steele assigns this, among other reasons, for the publication of his little book, intituled, "The Christian Hero."

† Afterwards Lady Sundon, bed-chamber woman and friend of Queen Caroline. In the Life of Bishop Hoadly, prefixed to his Works, are many letters from that worthy Prelate to Mrs. Clayton.

‡ Either Mrs. Bevans, or Mr. Alexander Scurlock.

and

and could not write yourself. I would not use so harsh a phrase as *expect*, though I have formerly taken the liberty of that word when it concerned a Queen *; but I beseech you, when you have health, to employ your own fair hand to, Madam,

Your most obliged and affectionate husband,

RICH. STEELE.

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355. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, APRIL 26, 1717.

I AM much obliged to you for so long a letter in your own hand-writing. I am glad you are any way got out of Davies's clutches; there is no possibility of escaping out of such claws without loss of some blood. I am trying to get out of hucksters' hands here also.

It is not possible to describe to you the perplexities into which the business of this Nation is plunged; and it is a melancholy reflection, that one has no comfort in considering the affairs of this distressed people, but as ill-usage and a general corruption abate one's concern for the publick.

Yours ever, RICH. STEELE.

* In his "Crisis."

356. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, APRIL 30, 1717.

YOURS, without date, lies before me. I am sorry you give yourself any inquietude about the frivolous little humours of others. There is a plain affable way of acting, without engaging one's self with much concern, which you understand well enough if you please. I take Sir Thomas Stepney *— to be a fair, worthy gentleman, and in the interest of his country.

That this may find you in ease and tranquillity, is the hearty prayer of your affectionate husband, and most humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

357. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [MAY 1, 1717.]

YOU never date your letters, which very much perplexes me. To avoid the same fault, I tell you that I have just received yours on Wednesday evening, May the 1st, and sit down to answer now I am alone and at leisure. I am heartily concerned for your eyes. I have often told you, I believe you have used enchantments to enslave me; for an ex-

* Sir Thomas Stepney, bart. was then one of the members for the county of Carmarthen.

pression

pression in yours of *good Dick* has put me in so much rapture, that I could forget my present most miserable lameness, and walk down to you. I have at this time interest enough to do what you ask for Sandy; but I do not ask Mr. Secretary Addison any thing. Gillmore dined with me to-day, when Benson was expected, but did not come, to our great uneasiness; for we were to have taken measures to bring the matter into Parliament, and concerted every thing else relating to the machine, which is a most prodigious work.

My Lord Cadogan, who is now in the first degree of favour, sat with me here the other night above an hour. I should, by his great frankness and generosity of mind, be rightly recommended and represented; but my decrepid condition spoils all. The money is not yet come to hand, which makes me very uneasy, and out of patience.

I think the affair which Sandy asks for, is to be surveyor of glass windows for Carmarthen, and an adjacent county. I had not interest in the Treasury till this new commission * was constituted; but think there is not one in it that would not be ready to do me a little favour.

My dear little peevish, beautiful, wise governess, God bless you. RICH. STEELE.

I do not write news to you, because I have ordered the letter from the Secretary's office to be sent to you constantly.

* The then Lords-commissioners were, Viscount Stanhope, Lord Torrington; with John Wallop, George Baillie, and Thomas Micklethwayte, esquires.

THURSDAY,

THURSDAY, 3 IN THE AFTERNOON,
MAY 2, 1717.

I had a very painful night last night, but, after a little chocolate an hour or two ago, and a chicken for dinner, am much more at ease.

Your servant, RICH. STEELE.

358. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MAY 7, 1717.

I AM glad to hear, by a letter from your cousin, that you are well: but have taken physic this morning, and cannot hold down my head to paper; therefore hope you will excuse

Your faithful, obliged husband,

RICH. STEELE.

359. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MAY 9, 1717.

I HAVE intelligence from Carmarthen that you are well at Blancorse. Upon serious reflection, your not giving me one line yourself is such a slight notice of me, that indeed I will not write to you hereafter but in answer to your own hand. If Sandy tells

tells me that "you are well;" I will repartee, "I am well," to him, without farther pains-taking.

I was forced to lie last night at a lodging next door to Mr. Wilks, in Covent-garden.

The children and all your family are well.

Yours ever, RICH. STEELE.

360. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MAY 11, 1717.

I HAVE a letter from Blancorse of the 6th, from Mr. Sandy. You might have made use of the same conveyance. I cannot, nor will I, bear such apparent neglect of me; and, therefore, if you do not write yourself, except you are not well, I will not write to you any more, than by telling your Secretary, "I am well," &c.

Yours, RICH. STEELE.

361. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [undated.]

I AM under much mortification from not having a letter from you yesterday; but will hope that the distance from the post, now you are at Blancorse, is the occasion.

I love

I love you with the most ardent affection, and very often run over little heats that have sometimes happened between us with tears in my eyes. I think no man living has so good, so discreet a woman to his wife as myself; and I thank you for the perseverance in urging me incessantly to have done with the herd of indigent unthankful people, who have made me neglect those who should have been my care from the first principle of charity.

I have been very importunate for justice to the endeavours I have used to serve the publick; and hope I shall very soon have such reparation as will give me agreeable things to say to you at our meeting; which God grant to you and your most obsequious husband, RICH. STEELE.

362. TO LADY STEELE.

MY DEAR, HONOURED, LOVELY PRUE,

[undated.]

I YESTERDAY received two letters from you by the same post, and am comforted from the fear of your want of health, which I thought occasioned the omission of a letter. The letter wherein you speak of the 100*l.* remitted to Mrs. Clark has no date, which always creates puzzles. I highly admire and honour you for your good conduct in clearing your estate and paying your debts. Nothing on my part shall be omitted, to render you chearful

chearful in your endeavours for our common good: for I design to allow you to be the head-piece, and give as much into your power as I can, which is but justice to the good and skilful use you have made of the power already reposed in you.

The poor Spanish horse is dead; the mule I shall make a present of to a young gentleman who is fond of him. I expect a horse fit for my own riding in return. I gave Mrs. Evans your letter; her brother-in-law is at present very ill, so that she cannot make any resolution. You ask about my chariot. Fuller made me a present of a very good one: the old one, with ten pounds, will purchase a good chaise. Depend upon it, I abhor debt as much as treason. Ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

You may be sure I have said nothing to Dick Philips which I should not have said, &c.

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363. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MAY 14, 1717.

I HAVE your kind letter of May 7, which was a great pleasure to me. I begin to think I shall have my limbs very soon again, for I am in an unusual freedom in my faculties. If you have business to do in the country, do it, for things here are not yet in so good a way as I hope they will be soon. You must not put me off with excuses for want of paper, since I send you every post a sheet to answer with,

with, inclosed with that I write to you. I am, dear Prue, ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

364. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MAY 18, 1717.

I WAS mightily pleased with a letter under your hand, for the length of which I thank you. I do not insist upon long epistles; but to have a line is absolutely necessary to keep up our spirits to each other. I am obliged to you for your inclination towards the girls, and the thought of taking up the mortgage. You bid me write no cross stuff. I ask no unreasonable things, to keep me in good humour. I cannot imagine what you and your cousin can have disagreed so much about; but she is my relation as she is yours. I am wonderfully recovered to what I was.

Eugene, Betty, and Molly, are in perfect health.

Ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

Mrs. Clark has just now been here. She pleads poverty; and I have promised her, as soon as I get money, to pay her the interest which was due on the fifty pounds which you have paid off.

365. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MAY 22, 1717.

YOUR son is now with me, very merry, in rags; which condition I am going to better, for he shall have new things immediately. He is extremely pretty, and has his face sweetened with something of the Venus his mother, which is no small delight to the Vulcan who begot him *.

Ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

366. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MAY 22, 1717.

I HAVE yours of the 18th, and am always pleased when I see any thing under your fair hand: but, by the way, I expect the sheet of paper I send to you sent up to me in the next letter, and not such scandalous half sheets. The report of exempting me from pay is false; for five hundred pounds, "for the time the Commission was in Scotland," is already ordered me, which I daily expect to receive. As for your staying all the winter, I long to see you, and we will never part again till death separate us. Benson is so busy with great men

* See Letter 369, p. 450.

that

that Gillmore's affair * is retarded by it. I will say nothing about my coming down till I see further about the duration of this session of Parliament. I am ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

Lest you should not read well the interlineation †, I say, the five hundred pounds ordered me is for the time the Commission was in Scotland.

367. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [undated.]

IF you knew how glad I am to see a long letter from you, I dare say, as fantastically shy as you are of doing any thing that should make your husband think you love him, you would oftener afford me that pleasure. When Jonathan answers my letters, I shall know what to do; but, if I thought quite so ill of him as the rest of his relations do, I should wholly decline the thought of serving him. I never had any thought of making an expence at Carmarthen but on a fairer prospect than I ever yet saw.

I have had abundance of reflection since we parted; and, in the future part of my life, you will find me a very reserved man, and clear of all

* This refers to one of Sir Richard's projects, alluded to in many of the preceding and subsequent letters for which, in June 1718, he obtained a patent, whence he derived ultimately no advantage.

† The words marked in p. 447, by inverted commas.

hangers-on

hangers-on. I find, by all the care and industry which a man uses for others, if they are beholden to your pocket, they are only ashamed they were obliged to you, and leave your interest. I shall, therefore, hereafter make my expence upon my own way of living, and my own household and little family. Though my Wife gives herself whimsical airs of saying, "if she is unworthy, yet the children"—I say, though you talk of the children, if I will not mind you; I tell you—they are dear to me more that they are yours, than that they are mine: for which I know no reason, but that I am, in spite of your Ladyship's coynesses and particularities, utterly yours, RICH. STEELE.

368. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MAY 27, 1717.

TO shew you how little I deserve or understand what you mean by Mrs. Bevans's insolence, or Mr. Philips's wrongs to you, I make no answer to such unreasonable intimations, as if they were supported by me. I assure you, my head is too full at present, to enter into what it is impossible for me, at this distance, to apprehend.

I wish I could make you easy: I am sure I would do it; for I have no tranquillity when I think you are under any discomposure.

I am ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

369. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MAY 30, 1717.

I HAVE yours, wherein you rally about Venus and Vulcan *. I do not doubt but I shall see you as fine a lady as ever you were. I am sure I shall think you so: but complacency, and a little regard to a poor decrepid creature, ungratefully and barbarously used, I should think, you owe me as a Whig, if not as a wife.

This day there comes on in the House of Commons a debate †, whether the Earl of Oxford should be tried, and when. I am going thither out of curiosity. I am, dear Prue, ever yours,

RICH. STEELE.

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370. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JUNE 11, 1717.

I HAVE yours of the 5th instant, for which I heartily thank you. Your expedient of Nurse Jervase is a very rough medicine; but your own kind letters are a safe and a pleasant cure against such evils as you, in raillery, seem to apprehend. I write this from Richmond, where I have been since yesterday morning at a lodging near Wilks ‡, who, I believe, will bring matters to bear so as that there

* See Letter 365, p. 447.

† See an Account of it in "Political State," vol. 13, p. 724.

‡ His brother Manager at the Theatre.

will

will be no play-house but ours; allowing Rich *, who is almost broke, a salary while there is but one house.

I am in hopes, one way or other, let the courtiers do as unthankfully as they please, I shall pick up a comfortable fortune. When I said I would do towards you as to all mankind, you were to understand, that if I am hard upon no part of mankind, I shall not be so towards the nearest Relation in nature, a good Wife. Do not talk of Love taking leave of an object; I tell you I love you to dotage.

Gillmore is here with me; I took him to talk over our affairs, which I doubt not will succeed †. I am going to London, whence you shall hear how the family does.

JUNE 11, ST. JAMES'S-STREET,
HALF-HOUR AFTER NINE.

I am just returned hither, where I find all things in good order, and your children in perfect health. Your most obedient and obsequious husband,

RICH. STEELE.

* Afterwards the celebrated Manager of another Theatre.

† Mr. Gillmore's place of abode was at Nettleton in Wiltshire. The curious may find more information relative to this ingenious man in the "Account of the Fish-pool, consisting of a Description of the Vessel so called, lately invented and built for the Importation of Fish alive, and in good health, from parts however distant: a proof of the Imperfection of the Well-boat hitherto used in the Fishing Trade: the true Reasons why Ships become stiff or crank in sailing; with other Improvements, very useful to all Persons concerned in Trade and Navigation: likewise a Description of the Carriage intended for a Conveyance of Fish by Land, in the same good Condition as in the Fish-pool by Sea. By Sir Richard Steele, and Mr. Joseph Gillmore, Mathematician;" dedicated to the Hon. Sir John Ward, Lord Mayor of London; first printed in 1718.; re-published, with the Town Talk, &c. 1790, 8vo.

371. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JUNE 15, 1717.

I AM heartily glad my letter, which you received on Whitsuntide, was so agreeable to you. It is indeed in our power to make each other as happy as mortals are capable of being. I have, in pursuance of the resolution I told you of, parted with my new man, and have now only Willmot. If you think Sam would recover here, it is well to send him; but I cannot tell when I can leave the town, because the trial of my Lord Oxford will prolong the session: the Managers for that purpose were named yesterday.

I have been a little intemperate, and discomposed with it; but I will be very sober for the future, especially for the sake of the most amiable and most deserving woman, who has made me her

Happy slave and obedient husband,

RICH. STEELE.

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372. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JUNE 20, 1717.

I HAVE yours of the 14th, and am infinitely obliged to you for the length of it. I do not know another whom I could commend for that circumstance; but, where we entirely love, the continuance of

of any thing they do to please us is a pleasure. As for your Relations; once for all, pray take it for granted, that my regard and conduct towards all and singular of them shall be as you direct.

I hope, by the grace of God, to continue what you wish me, every way an honest man. My wife and my children are the objects that have wholly taken up my heart; and as I am not invited or encouraged in any thing which regards the publick, I am easy under that neglect or envy of my past actions, and chearfully contract that diffusive spirit within the interests of my own family. You are the head of us; and I stoop to a female reign, as being naturally made the slave of beauty. But, to prepare for our manner of living when we are again together, give me leave to say, while I am here at leisure, and come to lie at Chelsea, what I think may contribute to our better way of living. I very much approve Mrs. Evans and her husband; and, if you take my advice, I would have them have a being in our house, and Mrs. Clark the care and inspection of the nursery. I would have you entirely at leisure, to pass your time with me, in diversions, in books, in entertainments, and no manner of business intrude upon us but at stated times: for, though you are made to be the delight of my eyes, and food of all my senses and faculties, yet a turn of care and house-wifery, and I know not what prepossession against conversation-pleasures, robs me of the witty and the handsome woman, to a degree not to be expressed. I will work my brains and fingers to procure us plenty of all things; and demand nothing of you but to take delight in agreeable

agreeable dresses, chearful discourses, and gay sights, attended by me. This may be done, by putting the kitchen and the nursery in the hands I propose; and I shall have nothing to do but to pass as much time at home as I possibly can, in the best company in the world *. We cannot tell here what to think of the trial of my Lord Oxford; if the Ministry are in earnest in that, and I should see it will be extended to a length of time, I will leave them to themselves, and wait upon you.

Miss Moll grows a mighty beauty, and she shall be very prettily dressed, as likewise shall Betty and Eugene; and, if I throw away a little money in adorning my brats, I hope you will forgive me. They are, I thank God, all very well; and the charming form of their mother has tempered the likeness they bear to their rough sire; who is, with the greatest fondness,

Your most obliged and most obedient husband,

RICH. STEELE.

373. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JUNE 21, 1717.

I HAVE yours of the 17th, and am beholden to you that you will be persuaded to dress when I am with you. As for my share about the brats, Gillmore's affair goes on so happily, that I am in

* This company he did not long enjoy; for he was deprived of it by death next year, not long after Lady Steele's return to London.

no

no manner of doubt but I shall be able to do amply for them. I like your expression about immortality, and know our happiness in next life will depend very much upon our behaviour to each other in this. We may promote or interrupt each other on the way thither by our conduct; and, as I do not doubt your part to me, so I hope you will not mine to you. As for my vivacities, they are changed into chearful endeavours for the good of my family. I never can, I own at the same time, be what they call thoroughly frugal; but my expence shall be at home, in a plentiful supply of all things for you and the brats, with regard to pleasures as well as necessaries.

Mr. Hoadly, the Bishop of Bangor, has, in the Sermon* for which he is so ill-treated, done like an Apostle, and asserted the true dominion established by our Blessed Saviour.

I am, dear Prue,
Your most affectionate, obliged, obedient husband,
RICH. STEELE.

* This was the famous Sermon on "the Nature of the Kingdom or Church of Christ," preached before the King, March 31, 1717; which gave birth to the well-known Bangorian Controversy. In the preface to a volume of Sermons published in 1754, in which this discourse is preserved, Bishop Hoadly says, "At whose request it was commanded to be published, I know not; but I know that it was not, either directly or indirectly, from any desire of mine."—"An Account of all the considerable Pamphlets, &c. with occasional Observations by Pilanagnostes Clericus," was published in 1719.

† See p. 458.

374. TO

374. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, CHELSEA, JUNE 24, 1717.

I RECEIVED a letter from you without date. Your first article is about Sam, for whom you have the inclosed advice. There was no danger of my being a Manager against Lord Oxford without I had sought it, which I was far from doing; so far from that, that I had not the curiosity to be there to-day, which was the first day of his trial *. I am at Chelsea, with my books; and, by the help of God, will, for the future, avoid all odious offices, except where the safety of my Country is immediately concerned. I wish the behaviour of selfish and unskilful people may not put us into the danger which we escaped only by the intervention of Providence.

I have been at Chelsea ever since Saturday, and have enjoyed great satisfaction in my solitude. Betty and Molly were with me here yesternight, that is, on Sunday evening; they were very good company, and I treated them with strawberries and cream, and, according to my fond way, ate more than both of them.

I do not design to be at the House of Commons during the trial; but pass my time, while it lasts, in what will, I hope, bring a large sum of money in the winter.

I am glad your opinion falls in with mine, as to parting with Dymock, &c.

I am dear Prue, ever yours,

RICH. STEELE.

375. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JUNE 27, 1717.

I AM very uneasy upon not hearing from you last post. I have a great deal of merry and agreeable things to say; but the terror of my letters finding you out of order, makes me forbear any such unseasonable gaiety. Pray write without fail next post, if you are able. You will best judge of the inclosed.

I am your most humble servant, and obedient husband, RICH. STEELE.

376. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JULY 2, 1717.

YOURS of the 25th of last month is inquisitive whether the affair of Gillmore passes the House this present Session of Parliament. We have examined into the necessary method for such an invention. We must, in the first place, have a Patent * under the Great

* Sir Richard's patent for this invention was dated June 10, 1718. It appears from the publication already mentioned in p. 451, and from N° XXVIII. the last number of his "Theatre," that Steele expected to have made an ample fortune by this machine: but, on trial, it did not answer his expectations; for, though by this ingenious contrivance the fishes were supplied with a continual stream of water in crossing the sea, yet, not brooking the confinement, they battered themselves against the sides of the vessel, and were so much injured in their passage, that, when brought to market, they did not fetch a proper price. We learn however with certainty, from this letter, that Steele's *expence* was not *immense* on this occasion; and that the fate of his invention, though a great disappointment, was by no means such a loss to him, as it is represented by the writer of his life in the Biographia Britannica.

Seal

Seal for fourteen years, which is a thing cannot be denied. When we have this, we are to set forth to the Parliament, by petition, that we have such a Patent; and hope we shall appear to merit a longer term than the Crown is able to give us, and ask of the Legislative power to add to the fourteen years twenty-one more; so that, in the whole, the profits in the invention will be in our families thirty-five years. We are going to take the Patent immediately, which secures us at first, and shall bring our petition for the longer time next session. Benson is *at all the charge*, that is, the main expence; but you need not doubt but I shall, one way or other, be out an hundred pounds before it is perfected. All this while you are to know, that we are to have our charges placed in common when the thing comes to bear. It is demonstration that here is a very considerable estate; but I am come to that, that be it never so certain, I shall not act upon it in my expences till I am actually in possession of the growing profits. Excellent reformation! You shall be obeyed about Mrs. Clark, and Mrs. Keck, and every thing else in my power. The children are the most amiable things in the world, and I will keep them very gay and prettily dressed, for I grow a dull family creature. All my public-spirit and gallantry is turned into the care of a wayward beauty called a Wife, and a parcel of brats called Children.

Last night my Lord of Oxford was acquitted by the Lords, without coming to a trial. The Commons exhibited articles of impeachment against him: when they came to the place of trial, the Lords insisted that the articles of treason should be first

first tried. The Commons insisted on their own method, and would not come to the Hall on those terms; upon which the Lords acquitted their Peer. But the Commons immediately went into a debate, to bring in a bill to punish him another way; which debate is adjourned till to-morrow morning, and it is possible my Lord Oxford's triumph may be but short.

Yours ever, RICH. STEELE.

377. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JULY 4, 1717.

I HAVE yours of the 30th of last month, full of concern and care for me, for which I am infinitely obliged to you. As to my journey, I cannot tell what to say as to the time of setting out; but can by no means think of the stage-coach. I must travel so as to have my hours my own, and halt when I please; for, you must know, I begin to take great care of your Husband, as knowing he grows a very good one every way. As to money for our expences, I assure you I will take care of that; and much approve your scheme as to the Bath, before, and after, Carmarthen visit.

I believe Madam Evans is not with child, so that you may have hopes of seeing her; but the House of Commons were at a Committee of Elections till twelve o'clock; at the end of which, instead of waiting in the cold for a coach, and other inconveniencies in that wearied condition, I bid Willmot get me a bed in Palace-yard. He did get one next

to

to St. Margaret's church, from whence I now write to you. And now, at ten o'clock, the House are coming together, the next morning, about an Address * to his Majesty.

The Lords have been so careful of that great Patriot the Earl of Oxford, as to acquit him, upon a pretence of privilege which they never exerted before. The Commons have much indignation at this usage; and address the King not to pardon him, that they, the next session, may prosecute him in a parliamentary way.

But what are these things to us and brats? I am entirely devoted to you and yours.

Your most obedient husband, RICH. STEELE.

378. TO LADY STEELE.

TEN THOUSAND TIMES
MY DEAR, DEAR, PRETTY PRUE, JULY 11, 1717.

I HAVE been in very great pain for having omitted writing last post. You know the unhappy gaiety of my temper when I have got in; and indeed I went into company without having writ before I left my house in the morning, which I will not do any more. It is impossible to guess at all the views of Courtiers; but, however, I am of opinion that the Earl of Oxford is not in so triumphant

* The purpose of this Address was, "to except the Earl of Oxford out of an Act of Grace," which had been recommended from the Throne. See pp. 460, 461.

a way

a way as his friends imagine. He is to be prosecuted by way of Bill, or Act of Parliament, next session, in order to punish him according as he shall appear to deserve; and, in the mean time, to be excepted out of the Act of Grace which comes out next week.

Please to take the advice you give me on this subject, and keep your conversation out of the dispute. Your letter has extremely pleased me with the gaiety of it; and, you may depend upon it, my ambition is now only turned towards keeping that up in you, and giving you reasons for it in all things about you. Two people who are entirely linked together, in interest, in humour, and affection, may make this being very agreeable; the main thing is, to preserve always a disposition to please and be pleased. Now as to your Ladyship, when you think fit, to look at you, to hear you, to touch you, gives delight in a greater degree than any other creature can bestow; and indeed it is not virtue, but good-sense and wise choice, to be constant to you. You did well not to dwell upon one circumstance in your letter; for, when I am in good health, as I thank God I am at this present writing, it awakes wishes too warmly to be well borne when you are at so great a distance. I do not see any mention of your man Sam; I hope the Doctor's prescription has been useful to him.

Think, dream, and wish for nothing but me; who make you a return in the same affection to you. For ever, Your most obsequious, obedient husband,

RICH. STEELE.

Pray date your letters.

379. TO

379. TO LADY STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,
JULY 16, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

YOURS of the 10th instant lies before me. You are very good in thanking me for, what is my duty, being in pain when any thing disturbs you. You recommend care of health and money. God will, in his due time, restore me to the former by the use of my limbs, which is all I want of perfect health. As to money, I am grown very fond of it;—but, as you are a good keeper of it, I design your estate shall constantly be laid up after the mortgage is paid off; and the allowance for you and children shall come from me, over and above what your estate brings. This will enable us to put our children into the world, if God shall please to continue us to see them disposed of. The contest of the Bishop * has ended in the confusion of his adversaries. Dr. Edwards is, I suppose, of Bangor's side of the question in the main argument.

I cannot tell what to answer you about the Bath; but, when I leave this town, my servants shall have board-wages, and I will take a snap any how; for I must keep myself to myself, and have my Play † ready this ensuing winter, in order to be quite out of debt.

I approve your reflection, from what you see in others from want of education, to be careful of our

* Dr. Hoadly, Bishop of Bangor. See pp. 455, 472.

† "The Conscious Lovers;" not acted till Nov. 7, 1722.

brats

brats in that point. They are all well. Moll is as great a charmer as her mother, and will prove as great a sharper.

Dear thing, how I love you! RICH. STEELE.

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380. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JULY 24, 1717.

I HAVE yours of the 20th. I lament the lamentable condition you are in, with relation to the place, and other matters, therein described with great wit and spirit. But your letter is an argument against what you say, to wit, that it is impossible to write for a polite part of the world in that neighbourhood.

The King is at Hampton-court; and I design next week to go thither, with a petition for a small grant, to make myself easy.

If I succeed, as I am encouraged to expect, our labour for ourselves will be very much shortened, and I have little more to care for but to enjoy the pleasure of being, dear Prue,

Your most affectionate husband,
and most obedient humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

As I was going to close this, I hear the voice of Mrs. Keck talking to Molly. But she is so great a *Prue*, that she comes and goes without seeing me, though I am in the house. But I have sent her word I am writing, and she gives her service.

381. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JULY 26, 1717.

I HAVE your kind letter, which expresses your fears that I do not take care of myself, as to catching cold, and the like. I am careful enough when I am awake; but in the night the cloaths are kicked on the floor, and I am exposed to the damp till the coolness awakes me. This I feel at present in my arms and legs, but will be carefully tucked up hereafter. I wait with impatience for the receipt of money out of the Treasury, to make farther payments. I believe, when I have it, I shall wholly turn off my coach-horses; for, since I am at my study whole days together, it is, I think, a senseless thing for me to pay as if I was padding all that while, and shewing myself to the world. I have sent your inclosed to Mrs. Keck. She came into the dining-room to me when I sent away my last letter, and we had some tea; and, instead of such chat as should naturally arise between a great gallant and a fine lady, she took upon her to tell me, that I did spend my money upon my children, but that they ought to be better accommodated as to their dress, and the like. She is, indeed, a very good *Prue*; and, though I divert myself with her gravity and admonition, I have a sincere respect for her.

I was last night so much enamoured with an author I was reading, and some thoughts which I put together on that occasion, that I was up till morning, which makes me a little restive to-day. Your daughter

Moll

Moll has stole away my very heart: but doubt not but her brother and sister will recover their share—when we are all together, except their mother robs them all of him who is, dear Prue,

Entirely yours, RICH. STEELE.

382. TO LADY STEELE.

MY DEAR WIFE, [JULY 27, 1717.]

I READ your kind letter with a great deal of pleasure, and promise myself as much happiness as ever man knew in woman when we meet again. I hope it will please God to prosper our little affairs in such manner as that we may pass the remainder of our days in tranquillity: that is a state I have never yet known, but it is very much in your power to contribute towards possessing it for the future.

You mistake, when you say I wish to see Wales out of any suspicion; I assure you, I design that journey only out of curiosity, to see what, by your favour, will one day be in my posterity, if it shall please God to continue our children to us. They are now all three in good health, and I hope to tell you before this day se'nnight that I have paid Betty's schooling. As to the persons you mention in your letter, I shall conduct myself towards them as you shall advise. I cannot yet answer you as to the 200*l.* you speak of to be ready three months hence, but shall do all I can. I place the utmost of the

happiness of this life in you; and earnestly exhort you to meet me with the same disposition to be pleasing to me, as I have to manifest myself, in little as well as great occasions,

Your most affectionate and faithful
husband and servant, RICH. STEELE.

383. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, JULY 29, 1717.

YOURS of the 25th is before me. I am always glad when you write a great deal; but do not hurt your eyes to scribble longer than is easy to you. Your kind expression is the most welcome and pleasing thing which could possibly arrive at me.

Mr. Glanvill * of the Treasury asked me the other day, "how my wonderful girl did?" There is, it seems, a lady of his acquaintance, who visits Betty

* William Glanvill, esq. one of the clerks of the Treasury, and receiver of the revenues of the First-fruits office. He died in the January following, and was buried at Wooton in Surrey, where the following concise Epitaph, dictated by himself, preserves his memory:

"(Vicesimo secundo die Januarii)
Anno Salutis reparatæ
(MDCCXVII.)
Hic sitæ fuerunt reliquiæ
GULIELMI GLANVILL.
Requiescant donec veniat Redemptor."

The substance of his charitable will may be seen in Aubrey's "Surrey," vol. II. p. 144.

at school, and cries her up for a greater Wit than her Father—that is not much—but than her Mother either.

I am every day walking about the Offices, to get our salaries paid, that I might go into the country, and particularly the Bath, whence you shall direct me farther, that is, command my motions. But, if I find my limbs easy to me, I believe I shall vigorously pursue my journey to the dearest of women to the most affectionate of men.

Poor, dear, angry, pleased, pretty, witty, silly, every thing, Prue,

Yours ever, RICH. STEELE.

384. TO LADY STEELE.

MY DEAR WIFE, [JULY 31, 1717.]

YOURS of the 27th came to hand. I am very far from being insincere in my resolves about parting with insignificant people. I am ready to burst with indignation against my own folly, and melt with gratitude for your goodness in bearing so long as you have. I am in purgatory till it is otherwise, and am really in danger of falling into the contrary extreme of being too near and reserved. God Almighty grant that we may meet together in such dispositions as to enjoy with our little ones the only true pleasures of religion and virtue!

Yours ever, RICH. STEELE.

385. TO LADY STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,

DEAR PRUE, AUG. 3, 1717.

I HAVE yours, wherein you dissuade me from Wales, and tell me you hear I am ordered for Scotland. Mine of Saturday is on that subject.

I come now from the most disagreeable place in the world, a great man's table, and am unfit for writing, &c. but will be very long on this affair on Thursday.

Your most obsequious husband,
and most humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

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386. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, AUG. 3, 1717.

I AM going to Hampton-court, where the King now is, to solicit some matters relating to our Commission. I give a thousand thousand thanks for your very pretty and very kind letter of the 29th of last month. Forgive me that I am in haste, with a stedfast resolution in what you are so kind as to approve with so much affection.

I remain your most affectionate husband,
and most obedient humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

387. TO LADY STEELE.

MY DEAR WIFE, AUG. 9, 1717.

YOURS of the 4th is full of that natural terror you have upon you by the apprehensions of thunder. There is no talking away such fears. I earnestly recommend you to the protection of God, under that and all other amazement and failing of spirit. I take all the measures I am able to be a comfort to you, as you are a very great one to me; for I indeed, from reason and reflection, as well as tenderness and passion, take you for the best of women. How happy shall we be, when we are out of debt,—to have nothing to do but to please and exhilarate each other, and educate our children in the love of that God who made us their parents! The poor little things seem (as far as my partiality will let me judge) to have very good endowments. I hope we shall live to see these talents improved.

We have not had any thunder at all in these parts. God preserve you to your family, and,

Dear Moll,

Your most affectionate husband,
and most obedient servant,
RICH. STEELE.

388. TO

388. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, AUG. 17, 1717.

I AM in the utmost concern to find you so very uneasy as you are in the country. I am confident, if you had such a fellow as Dymock, whom you might command, it would be better with you, and you might be mistress of your estate as absolutely as you are of, dear Prue,

Your most obsequious husband and servant,

RICH. STEELE.

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389. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRRE, [AUG. 24, 1717.]

I HAVE yours of the 19th. I have done about the mention of Dymock, and believe you are in the right. The other circumstance to be considered in your letter is about removing. You say I did not tell you I had resolved it when you left the town. I did not myself know it then; but your instructions to me were, "Pall-mall, St. James's-street, Gerard-street, or a place near a Church:" which last you will have. I am confident, daily intelligence of what passes at the Playhouse will be some hundreds in my way; and money is the main thing. Get I always could, but now I will get it and keep it.

Your

Your affair is to make and keep yourself chearful; you shall have nothing to do but to enjoy; it shall be my part to labour and get.

I have had much struggle by reason of ill-payments, and unreasonable, hasty, severe people; among the rest, that hog Lady Vandeput. I have paid her to the end of last quarter, and have given her warning, and can remove any time between this and quarter-day without paying more than this quarter.

I shall on Michaelmas-day have 533*l.* due to me. If I can find means to have that advanced, I will pay off the coach-horses quite, and have no charge of equipage of any kind till we are together again in London.

How can you let your spirit sink, so as to mind what people say whom you do not esteem? Be yourself, and reserve your best self for, dear Prue,

Yours ever, RICH. STEELE.

I go to-morrow to Tunbridge, with Dr. Garth, to visit Lady Marlborough and the Duke *; so per-

* "Who had, in the December preceding, been seized with an apoplexy, which, though by the skill of Dr. Garth it was for some time palliated, impaired his senses, and at length terminated in a total decay, and his dissolution. His Grace, however, had after the year 1717 some lucid intervals. In the summer of 1718, Sir Richard Steele, with Bishop Hoadly and Dr. Samuel Clarke, made a visit of some days at Blenheim-house, by invitation; where, he found, the ladies and gentlemen of the family, and a few of the neighbourhood, had got up the Tragedy of "All for Love," to entertain the Duke of Marlborough, Lady Bateman (one of his Grace's grand-daughters by the Earl of Sunderland), who played the part of Cleopatra, had in vain applied to Sir Richard Steele for a Prologue on that extraordinary occasion, and seemed chagrined at the disappointment.

At

haps you may not have a letter by Tuesday's post, for I fear I shall not return till Wednesday.

At night, when the family retired, the Bishop desired pen, ink, and paper, might be brought to his chamber, and, the next morning at breakfast, presented to Lady Bateman an excellent "Prologue;" which she spoke, the same evening, to the Duke and Duchess, his Grace shedding tears at the unexpected compliment from a favourite grand-child. In the course of the Play, Sir Richard, who sat next to the Bishop, often observed how well and feelingly Captain Fishe performed the part of Anthony. This gentleman, who had been the Duke's page, had distinguished himself in the Army, and, as I have been informed, died a lieutenant-colonel. In one of the scenes where Fishe was very sweet upon his Cleopatra, Sir Richard whispered the Bishop, "I doubt this 'Fishe' is 'Flesh,' my Lord."—I must mention another incident at their going away. Sir Richard said to the Bishop, "Does your Lordship give money to all these fellows in laced coats and ruffles?" "No doubt," replied the Bishop. "I have not enough," said the Knight; and when he passed by them in the hall, he accosted them in a speech, telling them, "that he had found them *men of taste*, and, as such, invited them all to Drury-lane Theatre, to whatever play they should please to bespeak," he having then a share in the patent; which he had obtained in 1714, by the friendship of the Duke of Marlborough, which he owed to a pleasant repartee (reported to the Duke, and taken as it was meant) on his Grace's preferring his relations. See "Biographia Britannica," vol. VI. p. 3829. Bishop Hoadly and Sir Richard Steele had long been connected as public men and fellow-labourers in the cause of Liberty. The Tatler took share in the controversy with Bishop Blackall; and Mr. Hoadly was one of the five friends, who, in 1714, revised and corrected Steele's "Crisis" before it was printed. Mr. Addison, Mr. Lechmere, Mr. Moore, and Mr. Minshull, were the other four. See p. 356. Mr. Hoadly was also the reputed author of 'A Dedication to his Holiness Clement XI.' an admirable piece of grave humour, signed 'Richard Steele,' being prefixed to his 'Account of the State of the Roman-catholic Religion throughout the World,' published in 1715."

DUNCOMBE.

The

390. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, AUG. 28, 1717.

I RETURNED last night from Tunbridge, whither my last told you I was going on Sunday morning, to be back on Wednesday night; which I did

The following Prologue was the one *intended* by Steele for "All for Love," as acted at Blenheim; but it was withdrawn of compliment to his friend the Bishop:

"Since faint is praise which living merit draws,
And always posthumous is true applause;
Deny not worth, far from your eyes remov'd,
Its late reward to be rever'd and lov'd.
To Poetry devoted be this night,
And kill not, with your paultry cares, delight;
See how great Dryden could your Sires surprize,
Ere Funds were given, or Stocks could fall or rise,
Ere Avarice had banish'd Love and Truth,
And with its vile contagion seiz'd ev'n Youth;
When Vice had yet no other Fools to show,
But the well-natur'd Cully and the Beau;
'Twas "All for Love the World well lost" of old,
But now for Money better bought and sold.
For shame, that 's only yours, which well you give;
Neglect not life, only for means to live;
Look on yourselves, ye gaming race, with scorn,
And see what images these scenes adorn;
While Love and Fame alternately prevail,
As the great Master works the charming tale.
Compare the generous passions he excites,
To the fell anguish of your gaming nights,
When round pale boards you sit with fiendlike pain,
For base vicissitudes of loss and gain;
When Robbers, Beggars, Peers, with silent hate,
And throbbing breasts, to be each other, wait.
When thus our Bard (resist him if you can)
Has fairly from the Gamester won the Man;

Raise

accordingly, and found yours of the 22d, and that of 24th. Yours, 22d, speaks again of Dymock. I give that matter up, and believe you in the right. Yours, 24th, concerning Mrs. Philips; I lament the poor lady's fate, and share in the uneasiness the reflection upon it gives you. Pray do not give way to fancies about your health, but bear up and expect good days, negligent of this world as to its duration, careful as to its uncertainty.

"The inclosed letter I send you, to shew you a present difficulty I labour under; and shall be determined by you.

When the Commissioners parted, they resolved to meet at Edinburgh on the 10th of the next month. But that I am not able to do, for many reasons. The gentleman who writes the inclosed, Sir Harry Houghton, will be ready to relieve me the middle of November, provided I hasten thither now; if not, I must stay till the latter end of January. The staying in Scotland till then would break all my measures. If I followed my own inclinations, I should go to Wales, though I stayed but two days,

> Raise thyself still—and the past times survey,
> Since first the age receiv'd this tow'ring Play,
> Since careless Luxury its force could prove
> In one consent the "World well lost for Love."
> Reflect how Care pursues her thoughtless hours,
> And fear the adder lurking in the flowers;
> Think on great WILLIAM, England's shame and pride,
> And how unthank'd the toiling Hero dy'd,
> On baffled Virtue, Fortune vainly kind,
> Think on your conquests to your foes consign'd;
> But think, though in tempestuous seasons tost,
> While Liberty is safe, *the World not lost.*"

and

and cross the country into the Lancashire road. I got on horseback at Tunbridge, and am confident I can ride thirty miles a day with ease; however, I design to take the method you propose of a chaise. Suppose I should bring Madam Clark down with me, only to attend your journey; it would, I think, be right. Your opinion of these great points, next post, will be very welcome. Your daughter Betty, who is here two or three days for the holidays of Bartholomew-tide, desires to know whether I am writing to you or not; if I am, she desires her duty. Molly cannot endure any kindness I shew this visitant, and I am not a little delighted to see a young lady jealous of my favour.

If you and I were together, and all our children with us, I should never be a leisure moment out of my own house.

I am resolved, God willing, to have it so; and, for the future, even travel with my whole family. I will get the better of you in this matter; and you must submit to have me fond of you and yours at what place, and in what way, I think fit. This is the harshest piece of arbitrary power I will be ever guilty of.

Yours ever, RICH. STEELE.

391. TO

391. TO LADY STEELE,

DEAR PRUE, [undated.]

I DO not know how to give you an account of my present prospects; but can only say, that the Commissioners of Scotland demand me there with so much impatience, that go I must. However, it is less painful to me, because Benson is now in town, and will take care in my absence of the greatest concern of all, which is now brought to perfection *.

If I can value myself upon the half-year's pay already due to me, I shall leave the town without any murmur against me. God send us an happy meeting, and that the rest of our days may be free from debt!

I am, faithfully, affectionately,

Yours, RICH. STEELE.

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392. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [undated.]

THE last I received from you, which was last night, had no date. It is indeed, as you observe, a strange kind of life we lead, and the separation is painful to me for one reason more than it is to you.

If you think fit to go to the Bath, I cannot imagine but a woman of your estate will find friends

* The Fish-pool. See p. 305.

enough,

enough, to raise as much money as will carry you thither.

I alter the manner of taking my journey every time I think of it. My psesent disposition is, to borrow what they call *a post-chaise* of the Duke of Roxborough. It is drawn by one horse, runs on two wheels, and is led by a servant riding by. This rider and leader is to be Mr. Willmot, formerly a carrier, who answers for managing on a road to perfection, by keeping tracks, and the like. I think also at present to be off my new house, and let things be as they are till we meet, when you shall choose for yourself an house; *which I will like because you like it.*

As to your desire of contriving plenty of money, I have made a bargain with our paymaster for so much, whether it is come out of the Treasury, to pay always within ten days after quarter-day from Christmas next; so that we will not want any more. I shall contrive also to have a quarter before-hand, and never let family tick more for victuals, cloaths, or rent.

I know this is better talk to you, than if it were a paper of Wit, written by your beloved Cowley. But all shall, God willing, be punctually performed by, dear Prue,

Your most obsequious husband,
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

393. TO

393. TO LADY STEELE.

HAMPTON-COURT, SATURDAY,
DEAR PRUE, AUG. 31, 1717.

A MAN of quality, going to town, waits to take this with him, so that I cannot say more till Tuesday.

Yours ever, RICH. STEELE.

394. TO LADY STEELE.

HAMPTON-COURT,
DEAR PRUE, AUG. 31, 1717.

I WISH you would once say, you would like a thing, because I like it. I know not whether what I have taken is to be called in a court. It is a fore-door, at which a coach can set down at the very threshold, in Hart-street, Covent-garden; and behind it a little court, in which there is but one house, into King-street, Covent-garden. I have taken no lease, and can part with it when I please to Mr. Wilks *, who designs to buy it of the landlord. As to all other matters, I am contriving for the best. You talk of the cheapest way, &c. to get to town. I beg of you to be easy in such points; you shall have every thing your heart can wish, in the reach of a moderate fortune. Pray be contented

* Then one of the managers of Drury-lane Theatre.

with

with laying up all your estate, which I will enable you to do; for you shall be at no manner of charge on any thing in nature, for yourself, children, or servants, and they shall be better provided for than any other family in England; for I shall turn my expence and delight all that way. Therefore, in the name of God, have done with talk of money, and do not let me lose the right I have in a woman of wit and beauty, by eternally turning herself into a dun: Forgive the comparison. When my heart is fixed to think of you as the object of love, esteem, and friendship, and all that is soft; it is in a moment turned into sorrow and anxiety, to find ways to make you contented about trash and dirt. Pray let it be otherwise: till you do, a thousand good qualities in you are (like a miser's wealth) mine without enjoyment.

Your son grows a lusty boy, and is your servant, as is his father most heartily. RICH. STEELE.

I writ to you a note to-day before, by one going to town; and write again, having occasion to send Willmot on other business.

895. TO LADY STEELE.

HAMPTON-COURT,

DEAR PRUE, SEPT. 12, 1717.

WILLMOT brought me yesterday yours of the 2d and 5th instant. The first determines my Scotch journey,

journey, before I see Wales. I shall take your advice in the manner of it, if I find I cannot do yet better; but I may possibly join with two or three gentlemen, and hire a coach for ourselves. You may depend upon it, I will take care of myself, now you say you value me.

I had altered my design of removing, for fear you should not like the house, and should have given a sum to be off; but Lady Vandeput has sent word she has let the house, therefore I must go.

Yours of the fifth, imports only that you are gone to Blancorse, bidding me take care of my health, and ending "yours entirely." This last phrase is easy to utter at this distance; but I fear, were we together, I should have you at the same coy tricks. But if I am, by the blessing of God, in as good health and as good plight as at present, when we meet, I must banish all these for ever.

For ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

Since I writ the above, I am to thank you for the receipt of a third letter, dated the 5th, from Blancorse. I have, before, said that I cannot help going to the house now, for Madam Vandeput has another tenant. But you shall do what you will, stay or leave it, when you have seen it.

Yours, R. S.

396. TO LADY STEELE.

HAMPTON-COURT,

DEAR PRUE, SEPT. 14, 1717.

YOU hear from me so often from this place, that I fear you think I am become, what you mortally hate, a Courtier. But, being obliged to defer my journey for some days, I have taken it in my head to spend that little wit and humour, which they say I have, rather in the company of the greatest persons in the world (who, if they do me no other good, are cheaper conversation), than with such from whom I can neither reap experience or any other valuable thing, and by whom I daily impoverish myself. Madam Vandeput has thoroughly nettled me; but, as she is of the fair sex, I shall not make answer to her usage in word or deed, but go to town on Monday, and move from her house that week, and towards Scotland the week after, so as to be at Edinburgh the beginning of October. Sir Harry Houghton * has again writ me word, he will relieve me when I let him know my business requires my return to London.

Yours ever, RICH. STEELE.

* A Brother Commissioner.

397. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [SEPT. 18, 1717.]

YOURS of the 13th of September tells me you have got the amusement of the gout. We must, in all cases, look upon every thing in the most hopeful light, and not put the worst upon accidents. If women are instigated with desire so much as men when they are gouty, we shall have odd time of it, and you will, in your heart, at least be tractable to me. We shall be rich, and we must take the distemper peculiar to that circumstance in good part.

You see I obey your orders, and do not write peevishly, though I cannot but be out of humour at losing so delicious a morsel as your Ladyship by frequent incapacities, as you will be in if this disease should frequently visit you.

Gillmore's project * is certain to succeed; and I bear the present, from the prospect of the future, with an equal mind.

I am, Madam,
Your Ladyship's most obliged husband,
and most obedient humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

* See p. 451.

398. TO

398. TO LADY STEELE.

MY DEAR PRUE, SEPT. 20, 1717.

I HAVE yours of the 16th, and am heartily troubled that we share in a new calamity, to wit, having the same distemper *. Pray take care of yourself, and you will find that we shall be in great plenty before another year turns round. My dear Wife, preserve yourself for him that sincerely loves you, and to be an example to your little ones of Religion and Virtue. If it pleases God to bless us together with life and health, we will live a life of piety and chearful virtue. Your daughter Bess gives her duty to you, and says she will be your comfort, but she is very sorry you are afflicted with the gout.

The brats my girls stand on each side the table; and Molly says, that what I am writing now is about her new coat. Bess is with me till she has new cloaths. Miss Moll has taken upon her to hold the sand-box, and is so impertinent in her office, that I cannot write more. But you are to take this letter as from

Your three best friends,

BESS, MOLL, and THEIR FATHER.

Eugene was very well this morning.

Moll bids me let you know that she fell down just now, and did not hurt herself.

Betty and Moll give their service to Sam and Myrtle.

* The gout; see p. 482.

399. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, SEPT. 24, 1717.

I AM still in the house at St. James's-street; but shall leave it on Thursday, if I can dispatch the business I expect to do to-morrow. I do hereby promise you never, directly or indirectly, to have any thing to do with the Court; for I am convinced there is nothing to be done with those poor creatures called *great men*, but by an idolatry towards them, which it is below the spirit of an honest, free, or religious man, to pay.

This, I hope, you will take for good news, for it brings my thoughts and cares into a narrower compass, and is what you have ever been persuading me to. My own studies at the Theatre, Gillmore, &c. will amply do any thing I can form to myself, without stooping to servilities. I have some reason to expect that the Royal Family itself would be glad to favour me; but there are many obstacles between poor me and them.

Now, if I have health, which, by the blessing of God, increases to a comfortable degree, this resolution of throwing away all pretensions from the Court may, perhaps, fortify me to be the more useful to my King and Country in Parliament, and every where else. The children, God be thanked, are all well. Now let me answer to what you say, that I have not expressed any thing about a desire of our meeting again. There is nothing upon earth I wish so much, provided always that you will be what you

you ought to be to me, and not let me burn for what ought to be free to me; and that you will have the children in the house with us; for I am come to take great delight in them. When I return from Scotland, we will never part more.

I am, with the sincerest affection,
Your obsequious husband,
and obedient servant, RICH. STEELE.

400. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [SEPT. 28, 1717.]

I HAVE your agreeable letter of the 23d instant; the first time you ever so much as alluded to any thing that way. My dear Wife, let us strive to improve and recommend our persons to each other. As for the 100*l.* a quarter, I have secured it, during this Commission, from Christmas next; for I have agreed with a paymaster to let me have my salary ten days after the quarter shall become due; and have provided that this will be having a quarter before-hand, for I shall be supported in Scotland by what is already due, and not what is growing due.

When we once come to endeavour mutually to please each other, we shall succeed, and be always in good-humour.

The brats are all well; and I am ever
Truly thine, RICH. STEELE.

401. TO

401. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, SEPT. 30, 1717.

I AM sorry you have spent your time so as that you are at a loss for credit enough to bring you from a place you dislike. I have told you that I cannot pay a quarter beforehand till Christmas; but, from that instant, I think we shall be in as much plenty as any family in England. Gillmore * is an inestimable jewel; he is now with his family at Nettleton, within eight miles of the Bath; but has this post sent me a letter, in which I find certain proof of the most useful work in the world.

The Commission in Scotland stands still, for want of me at Edinburgh. It is necessary there should be four there, and there are now but two; three others halt on the road, and will not go forward till I have passed by York.

I have, therefore, taken places in the York coach for Monday next. I shall, I hope, be able to send you word, the post before I leave the town, that all things are left in a comfortable way.

I am, dear Prue,

Your most obsequious husband,
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

* See p. 451.

402. TO

402. TO LADY STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,

DEAR PRUE, OCT. 3, 1717.

I HAVE yours. As to the incivilities and the like, I wish I had known they were to so great a degree sooner, I would have come and persuaded you to remove where you might have been mistress: and it is a jest for one, who has of their own, to be uneasy for want of changing place.

I fear I shall be detained here a day or two longer than I intended, for want of money; but, in all things, I will go as near as I can to your demands.

I shall not have 100*l.* to lay down till Christmas.

Yours, RICH. STEELE.

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403. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [OCT. 5, 1717.]

YOURS of the 30th of September now lies before me. I have already told you, that I cannot pay down 100*l.* beforehand, for your house and the like, till the 25th of December; from after which day I have agreed to be paid punctually my salary as soon as due, that is, within ten days after it is due. I take you at your word, to pocket none of it, but let it go to family uses; but you shall, if you please, leave the house-rent out of it, for I will spend on my

my children more than what is barely necessary. You are a coquet in the expression of "setting aside the agreeableness of my person"—you well know no woman has a better. I wish you would resolve to keep a discreet, orderly woman, to take care of your children; and why may not Mrs. Evans do for your business of providing the table and the like?

I will not go in the chaise; but will, according to your Ladyship's advice, go in the stage-coach. I observe that you are pleased that I do not remove till you come to town: I am very glad it is agreeable to you. I am very much troubled at your postscript; but what has a woman of your spirit and fortune to do but to live in a house or lodgings where she is mistress? But I cannot, at this distance, understand your reasons; when we meet, I hope these kind of ails will be at an end for ever.

As to money, I have at this hour 843*l.* due to me; and find a very hard matter at any rate to supply myself with cash to leave the town, paying the coach, the house bills, new cloathing the children, and the like. It is known by those to whom I apply that I want it, and I shall pay enough for it. But nothing is dearer than asking a Courtier any thing. There is no doubt of Gillmore's.* affair

* See p. 451. The author of "The Ode-maker," a banter on Dean Smedley, printed in the "Supplement to Swift," thus glances contemptuously, though impotently, at Steele:

"Or, lest thy chiming vein should cool,
What if thy friend *Sir Richard's Pool*
Thou didst describe, in lines and feet
For that queer nick-nack, pat and meet;

Inform

being a considerable fortune; and the Theatre seems to be in a very prosperous way. I am, dear Prue,

Ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

404. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR WIFE, [undated *.]

YOU cannot imagine the rage yours put me into. How can you believe I can bear the treatment you tell me you receive, as being affronted and called fool to your face, by rude blockheads? I could not outlive such an injury done you, were I present at it; nor know I how to suffer it as it is, with all the excuses which I make to keep myself in countenance from their stupidity and brutality. If I had patience, I should debate with you on this subject, and ask, how it is possible a woman of your sense could possibly fall into a dispute with such idiots and savages? But my heart is too much raised to chastise them, to enter into such cool expostulations with you.

Take it for granted, it is impossible to be easy but with mere correspondents and kind servants. You never will be with relations, who are often apt

Inform the Town, this freak being over,
He would proceed, and soon discover
An art long doom'd to deep despair,
And build a castle in the air."

* This letter probably was written a day or two before the succeeding one.

to

to think your being in the world an injury. For the remainder of our days, let us have an entire confidence in each other, with a mutual complacency and desire to please each other; and I shall be a protection to you, and you a comfort to me against all that can happen from without.

Mrs. Evans is not to be expected down; and when I proposed to Mrs. Clark what you bid me, she did not receive it as she ought, I thought; but made scruples, and seemed to be forming a merit in case she should comply, which shewed she would have shynesses and airs that would have made you constantly uneasy. Pluck up a resolute calm spirit, and do not doubt but there are people enough to be had fit for your purpose, without courting any of your present acquaintance. I will consult Mrs. Keck on this subject of a maid fit for you, and proper to go down to you, of which you shall have an account next post.

You bid me take care of my health; pray do you preserve yourself to your little ones, who are perfectly well, and your husband, who cannot be well except you are so.

I love you with all my soul, poor dear Prue; and am for ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

405. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, OCT. 8, 1717.

I HAVE been bustling about the town all day, and am come home when the post last rings.

Despise those who use you ill, and value those who love you; and you will make happy yourself, and most humble servant,

Your fond husband, RICH STEELE.

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406. TO LADY STEELE.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET,

DEAR PRUE, OCT. 9, 1717.

YOURS of October the 3d and 5th lie before me; most part of them are about things and persons that I can only neglect, &c. Your journey is a matter of consequence, and in this posture I will leave it. I will send you down a direction * to be sent to London with a proper direction; and that order shall command a coach and six horses, with a discreet woman in it, to bring you to town. This woman shall wait upon Mrs. Keck, and have her approbation, and the whole settled with her; which is the readiest way I can think of to follow your commands and inclinations.

I am, Madam,

Your most affectionate husband,

and, Prue, your faithful servant,

RICH. STEELE.

* So the Original.

407. TO

407. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, OCT. 15, 1717.

YOURS of the 10th, concerning the mortgagee's refusal of his money, is very surprizing. All that you have to do is, to take notice of the time when he refused it; and you will from thence be liable to pay no further interest. I am giving extravagantly for money; but my resolution is, to be rid of blood-suckers, though I lose a good deal at their last draught from, dear Prue,

Your most affectionate husband,
and most humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

408. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, OCT. 17, 1717.

I HAVE yours of the 12th, and have inclosed a letter to Mr. Thomas. I could not write to him directly, because I did not know where his *Trejendeg* stands. You had best not destroy the mortgage, because it may be of use to have it in being, in defence against any other securities, till we are both wholly out of debt. But, if he insists to have it destroyed, do not delay it, but comply with him, for I shall be a clear man before New-year's day. But, besides such considerations, while it is undestroyed,

destroyed, it may, by Mr. Thomas's assignment of it, at any time be so much well secured for the girls. Your lesson, therefore, is, take up the mortgage, but do not tear the instrument: but, rather than not take it up, tear the instrument.

Your most obsequious husband,
and most humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

409. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [undated *.]

YOURS lies before me, I mean that of the 14th. I will add two horses to your equipage. I did not think of a strange woman, but because you named no one of your acquaintance; I like Madam Clark as well as any body, and am glad she will go, for your children heartily want you. I am glad you resolve to live well on the road. As to the coldness, on this subject I answer very sincerely, that your Ladyship's coldness to me as a woman and a wife has made me think it necessary to suppress the expression of my heart towards you, because it could not end in the pleasures and enjoyments I ought to expect from it, and which you obliged me to wean myself from, till I had so much money, &c. and I know not what impertinence. God be

* This is in answer to one from his wife, dated the 14th either of September or October.

thanked,

thanked, this whimsey has not been fatal to our love!

It is impossible to decline going to Scotland, for ten thousand reasons, as well as regard to honour and interest.

I am, dear Prue, ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

I was going to close my letter, when Betty and Moll desire their duty to you.

410. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, OCT. 20, 1717.

AFTER many resolutions and irresolutions concerning my way of going, I go, God willing, to-morrow morning, by the Wakefield coach, on my way to York and Edinburgh. God of his infinite mercy preserve you, and grant us an happy meeting!

I am in too great a hurry, for I go on a sudden; but the next stage shall bring you a long letter from

Your most affectionate husband,
and most faithful humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

411. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, STAMFORD, OCT. 23, 1717.

I AM got thus far; and my journey, I think, does me as much good for the gout, as rocking the same way did you for the spleen.

I have ever proposed to myself to move in as useful a sphere to mankind as I was able, and have this journey taken with me Mr. Majon, a French minister (whom you have seen) in order to speak French readily at my return; for I find one cannot understand what passes without that language. He lies in the same room with me on the road; and the loquacity which is usual at his age, and inseparable from his nation, at once contributes to my purpose, and makes him very agreeable. It is my business while I am absent from you, to fill my leisure hours with as much innocent amusement as I can.

The children are almost always in my head at the same time with yourself; and I hope we shall, when God blesses us in a meeting, contrive to make them a pleasure as a care. I take very great care of myself in hopes of that happy hour; and am,

Your most affectionate, obsequious husband,

RICH. STEELE.

412. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, EDINBURGH, NOV. 5, 1717.

FIVE letters from you followed me to this place, which I received all at once this day. One of the 21st approves my letter to Mr. John Thomas, and desires you may do what you shall think fit by fine, by way of reserving a respect from your children, and doing what you think fit with your estate* in favour of such of your children as shall please you most. This is what I have often advised you to do, and shall never gainsay.

Another letter is without date, and has in it an inclosed note from your cousin Alexander. What is required there shall come to you by the post of Thursday next from this place. A third scrip, without date, says, my "letters are short, and so shall yours," and concludes. Your fourth is in very pleasant humour, which you say you can support, provided you do not want money, and you have bespoke gossips for your next child, &c. This is as it should be: keep up this spirit, and live and reign; you shall want nothing on my part towards it.

That which I think must have been the last you writ is of the 28th, and speaks of an assurance or obligation that concerns my aunt Scurlock. The post here comes in and out the same day; and I

* It descended to Elizabeth, their eldest daughter, afterwards Lady Trevor.

have

have many other letters to write, so must take till Thursday also for that. I am, dear Prue,

Ever yours, RICH. STEELE.

I shall return to London the beginning of next week; and I know the Parliament will separate for some days after they meet, which time I would take to come with a coach and six horses for you, accompanied by Mrs. Pugh. If you like this, I think it would close your negotiations with a good air, and drown all impertinencies about us.

413. TO LADY STEELE.

EITON, IN SCOTLAND,

DEAR PRUE, NOV. 11, 1717.

YOURS of October 31, came to my hand just now between six and seven the second morning—I should say Monday the third morning, going into the coach on my return to London. I hope, God willing, to be at London Saturday come se'nnight.

I will pay off the news when I come to town, and forbid it. I desire you would answer as to my proposal of coming down for you in a coach and six—with Mrs. Clark; which, I think, will pin up your affairs w'th a good grace, and shew your power over

Your most obedient husband,

RICH. STEELE.

414. TO LADY STEELE.

PEARCE BRIDGE,
IN THE COUNTY OF DURHAM,
FRIDAY, NOV. 15, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I AM now at my inn, in perfect good health, with my limbs much better than usual, after seven days journey from Edinburgh towards London. You cannot imagine the civilities and honours I had done me there; and never lay better, ate or drank better, or conversed with men of better sense than there. I grow very fond of waiting upon you, and bringing you from Wales, when the House is adjourned for a few days; and, since you hear travelling agrees with me, I hope to receive your permission to attend you. It will be a ridiculous thing for me to go down thither without you, and, when you are there, never come near the place; and I am firmly resolved to see your territories the first leisure days from Parliament. Therefore you must consider whether you will let me bring you, or come alone, and go backward and forward with me again this winter: for, as for seasons and bad roads, I despise those considerations, when I have a view for the good of my Family or Country.

Yours ever,

RICH. STEELE.

We shall, God willing, be at York on Friday, and London the Saturday following.

415. TO LADY STEELE.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT,
DEAR PRUE, DEC. 4, 1717.

YOURS of Sunday was very late notice of your arrival. Wilmot went to meet you that very day; but, lest you should escape him, I send Mr. Evans to meet you on the day you hope to come. I write this after being in the House of Commons from one at noon to twelve at night, where King George begins to have true and real honest power.

You come in smiles; and I will sacrifice all to your good-humour.

Obediently yours,

RICH. STEELE.

I am glad to find journeying agrees with you as well as me. I hope we shall never part more.

THURSDAY MORN.

I went to bed last night after taking only a little broth; and all the day before a little tea and bread-and-butter, with two glasses of mum and a piece of bread at the House of Commons.

Temperance and your company, as agreeable as you can make it, will make life tolerable, if not easy, even with the gout. God give us an happy meeting!

Yours faithfully, tenderly, &c.

RICH. STEELE.

416. FROM MRS. MANLEY*.

[1717.]

WHEN men cast their eyes upon epistles of this kind, from the name of the person who makes

* Daughter of Sir Robert Manley, a zealous Royalist. Early in life she was cheated into marriage with a near relation, of her own name, who had at the same time a former wife living. Deserted by her husband, she was patronised by the Duchess of Cleveland, who growing tired of Mrs. Manley in six months, discharged her, on pretence that she intrigued with her son. Retiring into solitude, she wrote her first Tragedy, "The Royal Mischief." This play being acted in 1696 with great success, she received such unbounded incense from admirers, that her apartment was crowded with men of wit and gaiety, which, in the end, proved fatal to her virtue. In the same year she also published "The lost Lover, or, jealous Husband," a Comedy. In her retired hours she wrote "The Atalantis;" for which, she having made free in it with several characters, her printer was apprehended, by a warrant from the Secretary's office. Mrs. Manley, unwilling an innocent person should suffer, presented herself before the Court of King's-Bench as the author. Lord Sunderland, then Secretary of State, being curious to know from whom she got information of several particulars which were supposed above her own intelligence, she replied with great humility, "that she had no design in writing, further than her own amusement and diversion in the country, without intending particular reflections and characters; and did assure them, that nobody was concerned with her." When this was not believed, and the contrary urged against her by several circumstances, she said, "then it must be by inspiration; because, knowing her own innocence, she could account for it no other way." Whether those in power were ashamed to bring a woman to trial for a few amorous trifles, or whether (her characters being under feigned names) the laws did not actually reach her, she

was

the address, and of him who receives it, they usually have reason to expect applauses improper either to be given or accepted by the parties con-

— was discharged after several public examinations. On the change of the Ministry, she lived in reputation and gaiety, and amused herself in writing Poems and Letters, and conversing with the Wits. A second edition of a volume of her Letters was published in 1713. "Lucius," a well-received Tragedy, was written by her, and acted in 1717. It was dedicated, as above, to Sir — Richard Steele, who was then on such friendly terms with her, that he wrote the prologue to this Play, as Mr. Prior did the epilogue. She died July 11, 1724.—The welfare of society being not at all affected by the misdeeds of those who have acquired any degree of eminence being known; on the contrary, when it is seen that, in spite of considerable talents, poverty and contempt (as in the present instance) generally accompany any deviations from the rule of right, it will tend to promote the practice of virtue, and be attended with consequences beneficial to the community; the following well-authenticated anecdote of Mrs. Manley is here preserved. In 1705 she was concerned with one Mrs. Mary Thompson, a young woman who had been kept by a gentleman of the name of Pheasant, of Upwood, in Huntingdonshire, and then deceased, in prosecuting a suit in Doctors Commons, on the part of Mrs. Thompson, as the widow of Mr. Pheasant; the object of the suit being to establish her right of dower out of Mr. Pheasant's estates, which were about 1500*l.* a year. It appears, on the evidence, which is recorded in Doctors Commons, that Mrs. Manley and Mrs. Thompson were jointly concerned in the prosecution, and that she was to have had 100*l.* *per annum* for life, if it had succeeded. They had procured one Edmund Smith, a very infamous fellow, and then a prisoner in the Fleet, to forge a marriage entry in the register at a church in Aldersgate Street, which was supported by Smith's — swearing himself to have procured the parson who performed the ceremony; and that he and a Mr. Abson were present at the wedding. The parson fixed on was one Dr. Cleaver, who appears, from the evidence, to have been a low and scandalous priest, and, it is believed, the man who married at the Fleet.

Cleaver

cerned. I fear it will, at first sight, be much more so in this address * than any other which has at any time appeared; but while common dedications are stuffed with painful panegyricks, the plain and honest business of this is, only to do an act of justice, and to end a former misunderstanding between the Author, and him whom she here makes her patron.

In consideration that one knows not how far what we have said of each other may affect our characters in the world, I take it for an act of honour to

Cleaver and Abson were both dead when Smith was examined. The cause was supported by some weak collateral evidence, and was overthrown by the strongest evidence to the wickedness of Smith's character, and by proof that the entry, which Smith swore to have been entered by Mr. Pheasant himself, was not Mr. Pheasant's hand-writing; who lived with Mrs. Thompson as his mistress, and not as his wife. Upon the whole, Mrs. Manley's conduct in this affair shews her to have been a base and wicked woman, capable of suborning perjury and forgery for gain. It is to be noted, that this was in the year 1705. In the latter part of Queen Anne's reign she was in high favour with the Tories, as a party-writer; and was noticed by Dr. Swift, whom she assisted in the *Examiner*. Whether he knew her real character, is perhaps uncertain. She passed the remainder of her life with Swift's very good friend, John Barber, alderman and printer, as his mistress. She must have been fortunate if her baseness was not known; if it was, Dr. Swift's friends at least are not much credited by their connexions with her. It is not likely that Mrs. Manley's conduct was a secret, as she was known as a writer before 1705; and Smith, in his evidence, swears that he first heard of the cause being instituted at a *Coffee-house* accidentally, where *Mrs. Pheasant's* cause was talked of, and Mr. Peere Williams, then an eminent counsel, was examined as a witness; so that the matter was certainly of public notoriety.

* Which was prefixed to "Lucius, a Tragedy, 1717;" being the dedication referred to in p. 182.

declare,

declare, on my part, that I have not known a greater mortification than when I have reflected upon the severities which have flowed from a pen, which is now, you see, disposed as much to celebrate and commend you. On your part, your sincere endeavour to promote the reputation and success of this Tragedy, are infallible testimonies of the candour and friendship you retain for me. I rejoice in this public retribution; and with pleasure acknowledge, that I find by experience, that some useful notices which I had the good fortune to give you for your conduct in former life, with some hazard to myself, were not to be blotted out of your memory by any hardships that followed them.

I know you so well, that I am assured you already think I have, on this subject, said too much; and I am confident you believe of me, that, did I not conceal much more, I should not say so much. Be then the very memory of disagreeable things forgotten for ever, and give me leave to thank you for your kindness to this Play, and, in return, to shew towards your merit the same good-will. But when my heart is full, and my pen ready to express the kindest sentiments to your advantage, I reflect upon what I have formerly heard you say, that the fame of a gentleman, like the credit of a merchant, must flow from his own intrinsic value; and that all means to enlarge it, which do not arise naturally from that real worth, instead of promoting the character of either, did but lessen, and render it suspicious. I leave you, therefore, to the great opportunities, which are daily in your power, of bestowing

stowing on yourself what nobody else can give you; and, wishing you health and prosperity, I omit to dwell upon some very late actions of yours in public, which unhappy prejudices made as little expected from you, as the zeal and solicitude which you shewed for my private interests in the success of this Play. I shall say no more, trusting to the gallantry of your temper for further proofs of friendship; and allowing you, like a true woman, all the good qualities in the world now I am pleased with you, as well as I gave you all the ill ones when I was angry with you.

I remain, with the greatest truth, Sir,

Your most humble, most faithful,
and most obliged servant,
De la Rivier Manley.

417. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, MONDAY MORN, JUNE 23, 1718.

I SEND this messenger to tell you that I shall not be with you till eight o'clock to-morrow morning. At that hour, God willing, I shall reach Hampton-court, and hasten (as soon as I have taken up you and the rest of my dear cargo) to London, where it is necessary I should be in the forenoon.

I am, dear Prue, your most affectionate, most obedient husband and servant, Rich. Steele.

I was so pleased with my son from his lodging to Hampton, that I shall, please God, take him with me to Scotland.

418. TO

418. TO MR. ALEXANDER SCURLOCK*.

DEAR COUSIN, DEC. 27, 1718.

THIS is to let you know that my dear and honoured Wife departed this life last night †.

* Cousin to Lady Steele; and nephew of the gentleman to whose memory Steele placed the following epitaph at Langunnor: "Near this place lie the remains of that polite person, Jonathan Scurlock, Esq.—When he had finished his studies in Trinity College in Cambridge, he arrived at a good degree of knowledge of the Laws at Gray's Inn in London. He officiated as a justice of the peace in the county of Carmarthen, which he filled with great reputation. If you consider the gentleman as a Christian, he filled all the several offices of piety to God, duty to his parents, love to his wife, liberality to the poor, and good-will towards all mankind. By a fate happy to himself, but to be lamented by others, he breathed his last on the 16th day of March, in the year of our Lord 1692, and in the 29th year of his age.

No man hath lived too short a time, who hath practised perfect virtue. CICERO.'

† On her grave-stone in Westminster-abbey there is the following inscription: "Dame Mary Steele, wife of Sir Richard Steele, knight, daughter and sole heiress to Jonathan Scurlock, esq. of the county of Carmarthen, died Dec. 26, 1718, aged 40 years; leaving issue one son and two daughters, Eugene, Elizabeth and Mary." Arms; Argent, a bend counterponé, Ermine and Sable, between two lions' heads, erased Gules; on a chief Azure three billets Or.—"The curious Reader, after knowing that this Lady was the wife of so remarkable a gentleman, will be undoubtedly disappointed with this plain inscription, which merely suffices to point out to her Children the spot of ground where the remains of their dear Mother were interred; and will be likewise extremely desirous to be let as far as possible into her character. In order to give such satisfaction, the Reader is to know that there is a monument erected to her in her husband's writings [Dedication to "The Ladies Library," see p. 351]; which may perhaps outlast, but will certainly last as long as the structure in which she lies; wherein will be found all that could be

I desire my Aunt Scurlock, and Mrs. Bevan, and you yourself, would immediately go into mourning; and place the charge for such mourning of those two ladies and your own, to the account of,

Sir, your most affectionate kinsman,
and most humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

419. TO BISHOP HOADLY *.

MY LORD, [1718.]

I HOPE I shall be able to wait upon you at the place you command me at three of the clock on

be said of the whole Woman, the Maiden, the Wife, the Companion, the Friend, the Mother, and the Mistress. Her virtues compelled him to pay her a public respect that is very unusual among the mistaken fashionable world, after marriage. Here the well-bred Husband makes public addresses to his deserving Wife, and with the greatest pleasure expresses himself."

Antiquities of St. Peter's, Westminster, vol. II. p. 195.

The following notices are from Lady Steele's handwriting:

"My daughter Elizabeth was born the 26th of March, 1709, on a Saturday evening, half an hour after six, or seven o'clock. She was christened the 6th of April; her godfathers Mr. Wortley Montague and Mr. Addison; her godmothers, my Mother and Mrs. Vaughan. My son Richard was born the 25th of May, 1710, on a Thursday morning, a little after three o'clock; and was christened the 24th of June; his godfathers Lord Halifax and Mr. Hopkins the elder; his godmother was my Mother (Mrs. Vaughan stood for her). My son Eugene was born the 4th of March, 1712, on a Tuesday, half an hour after ten at night. He was christened the 2d of April; the gossips Mr. Warner, Mr. Ashurst, and my Mother in person."

* Dr. Benjamin Hoadly, born at Westerham in Kent, Nov. 14, 1676; admitted Pensioner of Catharine Hall, Cambridge, Feb.

Monday next. There is no great danger of your assuming more power than is welcome: you never exert so much as is voluntarily given you. Coming home the other night, after your great condescension in liking such pleasures as I entertained

Feb. 18, 1691; elected Fellow, Aug. 23, 1697. In 1701, he was appointed lecturer of St. Mildred in the Poultry. In 1704 he obtained the rectory of St. Peter le Poor, in Broad Street; and Feb. 13, 1710, was presented to the rectory of Streatham in Surrey. Feb. 16, 1715-16, he was admitted and sworn King's Chaplain; and consecrated Bishop of Bangor March 18. In 1721 he was translated to Hereford, and confirmed Nov. 3. In 1723 he was translated to Salisbury, and confirmed Oct. 29; and, eleven years after, was advanced to the bishopric of Winchester, (confirmed Sept. 16, 1734,) which he held near twenty-seven years; till, on April 17, 1761, at his palace at Chelsea, in the same calm he had enjoined amidst all the storms that blew around him, he died, full of years and honours, beloved and regretted by all good men, in the 85th year of his age. His useful labours, which will ever be esteemed by all lovers of the natural, civil, and religious rights of Englishmen, were collected, in three folio volumes, by his son, Dr. John Hoadly, chancellor of Winchester, the last surviving male of a very numerous and respectable family, who prefixed to that publication a short account of the venerable Bishop's life.

In the parlour at Stationers Hall is a half-length of Bishop Hoadly, seated; an excellent portrait; habited in the robes of a Prelate, under those of Dean of the Order of the Garter. This eminent Divine appears to have been more than 60 years old, when the painting was made, and has pleasant full features shaded by a moderate-sized powdered wig. On a label under it is inscribed, "This portrait of Dr. Benjamin Hoadly, Lord Bishop of Winchester, Prelate of the most Noble Order of the Garter, was painted at the expence of William Wilkins, esq. Citizen and Stationer of London, out of the high esteem and veneration he had for the Bishop, on account of his being always actuated by the true spirit of the Gospel, and the principles of the Protestant Religion, and of his being a firm friend to Liberty, Religious and Civil. Mr. Wilkins left it to the Stationer's

your Lordship with, I made the distich, which you will find if you turn over the leaf *.

Virtue with so much ease on Bangor sits,
All faults he pardons, though he none commits.

I am, my Lord, your most obliged,
most obedient humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

tioners Company after his wife's decease; who departed this life the 29th day of July, 1784."

* The following article is extracted from a letter written by Dr. John Hoadly: "My father, when Bishop of Bangor, was, by invitation, present at one of the Whig-meetings held at The Trumpet in Shoe Lane, where Sir Richard, in his zeal, rather exposed himself, having the double duty of the day upon him, as well to celebrate the immortal memory of King William, it being the 4th of November, as to drink his friend Addison up to conversation-pitch, whose phlegmatic constitution was hardly warmed for society by that time Steele was not fit for it. Two remarkable circumstances happened. *John* SLY, the hatter, of facetious memory, was in the house; and, when pretty mellow, took it into his head to come into the company on his knees, with a tankard of ale in his hand, to drink off to the *immortal memory*, and to retire in the same manner. Steele, sitting next my Father, whispered him, *Do laugh; it is humanity to laugh.* Sir Richard in the evening, being too much in the same condition, was put into a chair, and sent home. Nothing would serve him but being carried to the Bishop of Bangor's, late as it was. However, the chairmen carried him home, and got him up stairs, when his great complaisance would wait on them down stairs, which he did, and then was got quietly to bed. The next morning he was much ashamed, and sent the Bishop the distich printed above.—On such another occasion the waiters were hoisting him into a hackney coach, with some labour and pains, when a Tory mob was passing, with their cry, DOWN WITH THE RUMP!—*Up with the Rump*, cried Sir Richard, *or I shall not be at home to-night.*"

420. TO

420. To the Right Hon. Sir JOHN WARD, Knight, Lord Mayor of London.

MY LORD, [1718.]

AS I think it manifest that the design, explained in the following account, will introduce a new and profitable course of trade; I presume to address this narration to the greatest Magistrate of the greatest commercial City *.

Your personal eminent qualities, as a good citizen and man of business, which I have frequently heard you exert, where you, with great ability, represent the same City in another honourable character †, entitle you also to the veneration and esteem which determine me in my present application.

The Arts and Sciences (in which I pretend to no accurate skill) should always be employed in enquiries that may tend to the general advantage; and they must lose the name of *liberal*, when the professors of them seclude themselves from society, or live in it without applying their abilities to the service of it. For it is by the joint force of men of different talents, that useful purposes are best ac-

* This was prefixed to the "Account of the Fish-Pool:" of which see several of the preceding Letters, particularly Letter 370, p. 451.

† He represented the City of London in the Parliaments elected in 1708 and 1714, and the borough of Dunwich in 1722. He was elected Alderman of Candlewick Ward in 1709; served the office of Sheriff in 1716, and that of Lord Mayor in 1718-19. He was also one of the Directors of the Bank; and died March 12, 1725-6.

complished;

complished; and a certain felicity of invention in one, joined to the experience and practical skill of another, may bring works to perfection, which would be so far from growth, that they would not so much as have had birth, but from the good intelligence between persons of unlike abilities, whose good will towards each other united their endeavours.

I dare promise your Lordship, that the correspondence between the undertakers of this design will produce to the world many other operations *, which will create more wonder that they were not performed before, than that they are now brought into use: for it is certain, that great and worthy works are every day lost, by the distance which is kept between men, from the very reason which should make them seek each other in their different ways of life and education.

Among the employments of human life, that of the Merchant (whose good is the good of all men) should by all be held in the first esteem: it is he who enlarges the interests of his Country; it is he who, by his credit, makes his fellow-citizen every where at home, and extends the offices, advantages, and civilities, of acquaintance and neighbourhood to all parts of the habitable world.

* If it were not that Steele had been, long before this time, laughed at as a chemist who was searching in vain for the philosopher's stone, one might have supposed, from this passage, that "the laboratory at Poplar, now converted into a garden-house," was the scene of the secret operations whence the Fish-Pool and other wonderful discoveries were to originate. See Swift's Works, ed. 1808, vol. V. p. 143, vol. XVI. p. 165.

The

The following invention is proposed to be carried on with a superior regard to the laws and rights of commerce, which oblige every man to think of himself but in the second place, or to make his first intentions, at least, strictly agreeable to the good of his Country, and that of all his fellow-citizens; and, therefore, the account of it may be a present not unworthy a gentleman of your free and disinterested character; and I flatter myself it will have the influence of your Lordship in the prosecution of it. I need not say how great that influence must needs be, where you act for them in the greatest capacities your fellow-citizens have to bestow.

I congratulate both them and you, that a person of such known equanimity is vested with the double capacity of asserting and protecting their privileges; whose candour and benignity naturally tend to abate animosity, encourage industry, promote peace, prevent disorder, secure wealth, and relieve poverty: in all which noble ends and cares I wish you a prosperous and memorable mayoralty; and again humbly desiring, that if the design shall in the least degree appear serviceable in any of these generous respects, it may have your protection.

I remain, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

421. TO

421. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE *.

MY DEAR CHILD, MISS BETTY,

ONE matter of moment or other has detained me all this day; nor can I see you to-night. I thank you for your purse; and, if you and I live till this day twelvemonth, you are to ask me for it again full of gold. God bless you! Remember me to Molly. Be observant of the good guardian † God has raised for you. RICH. STEELE.

422. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

DEAR BETTY,

IF you have a letter from Mrs. Keck to me, pray send it me by the bearer, sealed up. You may remember you sent me one open by him. He is a very faithful servant: but he might have been otherwise for aught you knew; not to say that it is also respect to me to have a letter from you when I send you one.

Give my most humble service to Mrs. Snow when you see her, and beg her favour to visit you. You are at your new lodgings; and always preserve the highest respect to her for being willing to receive you.

* His eldest daughter, afterwards Lady Trevor.
† Mrs. Keck.

But

But it is impossible for me to be easy without seeing you every moment I have leisure.

I am, most affectionately, your father,

RICH. STEELE.

My service to Molly.

I had business kept me at home all day.

423. FROM CAPTAIN ROGERS *.

NASSAU, ON NEW PROVIDENCE,

SIR, JAN. 30, 1718-19.

HAVING writ to you by several former opportunities, and not hearing from you, I have the greater cause to inveigh against the malice of the Pirates who took Captain Smyter, lately come from London, from whom I have since heard that there were several letters directed to me and Mr. Beauchamp, which the Pirates after reading tore.

Every capture made by the Pirates aggravates the apparent inclinations of the Commanders of our Men of War; who have openly avowed, that the greater number of Pirates makes their suitable advantage in trade; for the Merchants of necessity are forced to send their effects in the King's bottoms, when they from every part hear of the ravages committed by the Pirates.

* Directed "To the Hon. Sir Richard Steele; to be left at Bartram's Coffee-house, in Church-court, opposite Hungerford-market, in the Strand, London. *Via Carolina.*"

There is no Governor in these American parts, who has not justly complained of this grand negligence; and I am in hopes the several representations will induce the Board of Admiralty to be more strict in their orders. There has not been one here almost these five months past; and, as if they wished us offered as a sacrifice both to the Spaniards and Pirates, I have not had influence enough to make our danger prevail with any of them to come to our assistance, because of their greater occupations in trade. I, however, expect to be sufficiently provided, if the Spaniards, as believed, defer their coming till April.

At my first arrival I received a formal visit from a woman called Pritchard, who by her voluble tongue, and mentioning several of our first Quality with some freedom, and, withal, saying that she was known to you, Mr. Cardonnel, and Sir William Scawen, next to whom she lived, near the Story's, Westminster, that I gave her a patient hearing. She dressed well, and had charms enough to tempt the Pirates; and, when she pleased, could assume an air of haughtiness, which indeed she shewed to me, when I misdoubted her birth, education, or acquaintance with those Noblemen and others, whom she could without hesitation call over, and indeed some very particular private passages. She had often a loose way of speaking, which made me conjecture she endeavoured to win the hearts of her admirers to the Pretender's interest, and made me grow weary of seeing her.

This my indifference, and a little confinement, provoked her to depart hence for Jamaica, saying, "that

" that she would take passage for England to do herself justice, and did not come abroad without money to support her." She talked much of Sir Ambrose Crawley and his son, from whom she intends to provide a good quantity of iron-work; and, with a suitable cargo of other goods, she says she will soon make another turn this way; and is seldom serious in her talk. I thought fit to say thus much of a woman who pretends to such a general knowledge of men, particularly of you and Mr. Addison. If our carpenters had not otherwise been employed, and I could have spared them, I should have been glad to have made her first Lady of the Stool. She went hence, as I thought, with resentments enough; but I have heard since from Jamaica, that she has not only forgot her passion, but sent her friendly service to me; and, as I expect, she now is on her way home, designing to do me all the good offices that she can with all the numerous gentlemen of her acquaintance: but I cannot believe it; and I beg, if you see her soliciting in my behalf, be pleased to let her know I do not expect her company here, and she cannot oblige me more than to let me and my character alone.

Captain Whitney, commander of his Majesty's ship the Rose man of war, being one of the three that saw me into this place, and left me in the utmost danger so long ago—he also pretends to a knowledge of you, and several of my friends in London: but he has behaved so ill, that I design to forget him as much as I can; and if he is acquainted with you, and sees you in London before me, I desire he might know his character from the several ac-

counts I have sent hence; which, with what goes from other ports, may serve to convince all his friends that he is not the man that he may have appeared to be at home.

I hope Mrs. Ker and Roach whom I sent hence has been often with you, and that this will *keepe* your hands in perfect health, and that you have thrown away your great cane, and can dance a minuet, and will honour me with the continuance of your friendship; for I am, good Sir,

Your most sincere humble servant,

WOODES ROGERS.

Be pleased to excuse my writing to you in such a hurry, as obliged me to write this letter in two different hands. My humble service to Mr. Addison and to Mr. Sansom. This comes inclosed to Mr. G. with whom I hope you will be acquainted.

W. R.

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424. TO MR. ALEXANDER SCURLOCK.

VILLIERS-STREET, YORK-BUILDINGS,

DEAR COUSIN, FEB. 19, 1718-19.

I BELIEVE this will come to Carmarthen about the time of your arrival there; and I send it to signify to you that I foresaw many inconveniencies which might arise from making any assignment on the Playhouse; and therefore, instead of giving Mrs. Roach any order on that part of my income, I gave her

her another letter of attorney for an hundred a-year to be paid by you—that is a farther hundred; in all, two hundred. I shall take care, God willing, to appropriate all arising from the estate to the service of the children; but at the same time I must make it pay all funeral charges of the late possessors of it, my honoured mother and dear wife: therefore, I entreat you to have your thoughts upon supplying those proper charges with the greatest expedition that may be proper. I have ordered all the tradesmen to bring in their bills, and shall transmit the sums to you, and desire thereupon that you may tell me what they are to trust to as to time of payment. I am, dear Sandy,

Your faithful friend and humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

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425. TO DEAR BETTY STEELE.

DEAR CHILD, MAY 21, 1719.

I HAVE your pretty letter, and have sent to know whether I can have any tickets * or not, or whether there will be room; but have not yet an answer. Be grateful, obedient, and respectful to Mrs. Keck; and you will oblige your most affectionate father, RICH. STEELE.

Service to Molly.

* This probably was to a splendid Ball, which was given to the young Princesses, in the Greenhouse at Kensington Gardens, on the King's birth-day, May 28, the day on which their houshold-establishment was first formed.

426. FROM

426. FROM MR. CUTTEFORD.

HONOURED SIR, POOLE, MAY 28, 1719.

YOURS of the 12th instant received; and I shall, according to your orders, endeavour (I hope with success) to be laden with a cargo of live cod. Answerable to your desire, I shall receive judgment particularly; but according to the advice I shall receive from persons of more experience. However, your Honour may be assured, I will not omit any opportunity to shew your Honour and Mr. Gilmore, my patrons, how much I am

Yours, &c. HEN. CUTTEFORD.

1719, Monday, May 4, about noon got under sail, the wind at E. and E. N. E. small breezes; at four past noon came to an anchor, a little below Woolwich, in six fathom water, being quite calm.

Tuesday the 4th, this morning proving very foggy durst not move. At twelve weighed anchor with a stiff gale. At one the wind blew very hard; then opened all the sluices, and the pilot and all the ship's crew thought she sailed something faster then than when closed. The wind being at E. and E. N. E. she heeled half gunnel to; in that position, from one tack to another, we found her neither too crank nor too stiff, and never once missed her steering, either on the larboard or starboard tacks. We took exact notice that during this hard wind the water in the hold was not disturbed: only the motion of the current through the hold throws

throws some parts of it into eddies, which caused the top of the water in the well, by changing the water, to move in small ripplings, perceivable by chips on the top of the water; and those chips to move faster or slower, as the sluices were wider or closer, or the sloop went faster or slower. At four anchored at Gravesend against the Castle, in six fathom water.

Wednesday, at one in the morning, got under sail, had very little wind, and variable with calms. At nine got down about three miles to the Eastward of the buoy on the Nore, the wind W. N. W.; then let go our trawl net, and got a dish of fish, and put fastened into the well, then made the best of our flood back again; being becalmed, came to an anchor seven miles below Gravesend.

Thursday, at two in the morning, the wind W. S. W. and very small breeze and calms; so could only fall up with the flood. At eight or nine got to Gravesend, took the fish out of her hold as alive as ever, dined on them, and set sail for our voyage at five in the afternoon for Mont's-bay or Ireland.

Remarked by me, HENRY CUTTEFORD, Master;
and several others.

P. S. Honoured Sir, the pilot is just going on shore; so have only time to inform of our safe arrival in the Downs. We anchored here at nine this night. The pilot is hasty to be on shore.

427. TO MR. LAWS*, AT PARIS.

SIR, AUG. 12, 1719.

I BELIEVE you may have heard my name mentioned since I had the honour to converse with you,

* John Law, esq. (one of the early friends and companions of *Captain Steele*) was memorable for a fatal duel, in 1694, with *Beau Wilson*; for which he was tried at the Old Bailey; and, being convicted, received a pardon from the Crown; but was detained in prison by the relations of Mr. Wilson under an appeal. He found means, however, to escape; and going to France, became the founder of the famous Missisippi scheme.—In 1721 (having pacified the surviving relations of Mr. Wilson with 100,000*l.*) he returned to England, where he continued to reside till he received the mortifying intelligence of the confiscation of his whole property in France; but, being conscious of the rectitude of his conduct in the management of the finances, and that the balance would, upon examination, be found considerably in his favour, he had good reason to flatter himself with the hopes of receiving a large sum, especially as the Regent always professed a more than ordinary regard for him, and continued punctually to remit his official salary of 20,000 livres a year. But the death of his Royal Highness, Dec. 2, 1723, was a fatal blow to the hopes of Mr. Law; who, in a memorial to the Duke of Bourbon, dated Oct. 15, 1724, states himself as "bankrupt, not only in France, but also in other countries;" and "his children, courted by the most considerable families in France, as destitute of fortune and establishment."—"I had in my power," he says, "to have settled my daughter in marriage in the first houses in Italy, Germany and England; but I refused all offers of that nature, thinking it inconsistent with my duty to, and my affection for, the state in whose service I had the honour to be engaged." He bad a final adieu to Britain in 1725; and fixed his residence at Venice; where he concluded the chequered course of his life, in a state but little removed from indigence, March 21, 1729, in his 58th year.

and

and therefore will not suppose you have wholly forgot me. With this hope I enter upon the business of this letter with the less preface; and at once inform you, that the King has given me his Letters Patent for the sole use of an invention for bringing Fish alive and in good health, wherever taken, to any other part however distant. It is well known how ill Paris and other parts of France are supplied with that commodity; and it will soon occur to you what great advantage may be made of such a privilege, given by the King of France for his dominions.

You have enclosed an exemplar of the Letters Patent in print; and you shall join your own, that of your Brother, or any other name, in Partnership with me, in such a Patent.

The thing pretended is done to all intents and purposes; and I have, under a great deal of ridicule and contempt of the greater, the unthinking part of the world, worked it up to an undoubted experiment in a sloop of sixty-one tons. Further I am not able to carry it of myself; but, now the truth of the design is evident, I doubt not but I shall find means to carry it on from a partnership in the profits that may very visibly arise from it. The thing itself is a service to the world in general, and a merit to the whole species of men, and not only to this, or any other Nation; and therefore I presume it a request grounded upon the Law of Nature, that every Country should distinguish those from whom they receive benefit, without regard to the places of abode or nativity, or the soil to which they are born subjects. You have too enlarged a view,

view, and the Prince whom you serve has too well shewn (by his just regard and favour to you) the same magnanimity to need much discourse on this occasion.

But whatever befals this application, I wish your great and noble genius the continuance of prosperous adventures; and am,

Sir,

Your most obedient,
and most humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

428. TO MRS. ELIZ. STEELE.

MY DEAR CHILD, AUG. 21, 1719.

I HAVE your letter, aud am very much pleased with the improvement of your hand. I earnestly desire you to be careful of obeying whatever your good guardian * and kind mistress † direct. I have been taken up with cares, which, I hope, will make my children easy after me. I pray for you and your sister, and am

Your affectionate father,
RICH. STEELE.

* Mrs. Keck.
† Mrs. Nazereau. See Letter 45.

429. FROM

429. FROM MR. DENNIS *;

Declaring the Reasons for which he published the Two Volumes of "Select Works."

SIR, SEPT. 4, 1719.

I HERE send you, by the bearer, several pieces in verse and prose, written formerly by me, and lately printed in two volumes; but I send them not without a double design on you. For, first I desire that you would have the goodness to oblige your Managers to make me some recompence this winter for the wrong which they did me the last. Secondly, I desire that you will give me leave to say something concerning the pieces contained in these two volumes, and more particularly concerning the motive which obliged me to write the chief of them at the first, and to publish them lately together; which I shall do with pleasure to one who has done so much good in the same cause in which most of them were written.

Several of the pieces in verse and prose, and three of the Plays, were written in the cause of Liberty. The Narrative Poems of greater length were all of them written upon great and public occasions; and were designed as so many panegyricks upon those illustrious persons whose great and heroic actions had made them benefactors to Great Britain and Liberty.

It has always been my opinion, that a free Nation can never be too zealous in maintaining their

* The well-known Critic and Dramatic Writer.

Liberties,

Liberties, because we have been taught, by too many fatal events, that they have at last been often lost by the security and corruptions of those who had for several centuries enjoyed them. Witness the antient Grecians and Romans, and the antient and modern Spaniards and French. But whenever the Liberties of a great Nation are in manifest danger, there all the several members of it, who are not abjectly base, will use their utmost efforts in defending them. The Liberties of Great Britain have in our own memory been in so much danger, that they have been twice in thirty years retrieved from immediate ruin, first by the Revolution, and secondly by the Accession of King George to the Imperial Crown of this Island; but even now they by no means appear to me to be entirely secured.

Since the Revolution, things appear to have been strangely reversed in Great Britain with regard to Liberty. In four or five reigns immediately preceding the arrival of King William, of immortal memory, the Court was for Arbitrary Power, and the people appeared strenuous for Liberty. But, since that time, the Court has for the most part contended for Liberty; and the people, I mean too great a part of them, have declared for Slavery. Now, if ever we should come to be under a King who would sacrifice his Protestant Dissenting subjects to the High Church Clergy, we should quickly see whether the Liberties of a Nation are most secure, when a considerable part of the people (who are their natural guardians) are resolved to defend or determined to resign them. In the mean time, Sir, it must be acknowledged, to the immortal honour

nour of the present King, that, by endeavouring to secure the Dissenters from such a treatment in time to come, he is taking the most effectual method to immortalize Liberty.

Thus, Sir, have I acquainted you with the only motive of writing the chief of these Poems; which was, the apprehension I had of the danger which the Liberties of my Country were in, and consequently the Liberties of the Christian world, of which ours are the strongest bulwark. I wrote them not then as one who espoused a party, but as a lover of my Country, and one zealous to promote the happiness of Great Britain. I have been so far from having any ambitious aims or sordid views of interest, that I have been contented to see several of the public rewards engrossed by some who are luke-warm, and by others who are Jacobites in Whig-cloathing, while I have remained very poor in a very advanced age. But one thing, indeed, I have sometimes been apt to think exceeding hard; and that is, that these luke-warm persons, and these Jacobites in Whig cloathing, should be suffered to make use of the power which they have acquired by their falsehood, to the utter ruin of one who has behaved himself all along with the utmost sincerity in the noblest cause of Liberty.

Thus, Sir, have I laid before you the motive which engaged me to write the greater part of the pieces which are contained in the two volumes. I shall now shew you, how the same motive obliged me to use my endeavours to preserve them, if they should appear worthy of it, and consequently to publish them in the two forementioned volumes.

It

It was in October 1716, that I desired a Bookseller to collect them for me. I thought that, after so much time had passed since the writing them, I should be capable of forming as true a judgment myself of them, as any other person whatsoever, who has no better judgment in poetical matters than I have; or that the precept of Horace, *nonum prematur in annum*, must be false and vain.

Upon a very slow and deliberate perusal of them, I could not but conclude, that, with all their faults, they were not altogether deprived of that noble fire which alone can make them pleasing; nor of that justness and solidity which alone can make them lasting. I believed that, if they were published together, they might be able one day to do some good to the publick, and no discredit to me.

And I was the more encouraged to venture on this publication, because, Sir, you may be pleased to remember, that they had been favourably received by the most illustrious persons of both parties for their judgment in Poetry, and their knowledge of the *Belles Lettres*, by the late Earls of Godolphin and Halifax, Mr. Mainwaring, and others, among the Whigs; and by the present Duke of Buckingham, and my Lord Lansdown, among the Tories. And if any temptation could make me vain, it would be the favourable opinions of the last two noble persons, because, as their judgments in matters of Poetry are unquestioned, they can never be supposed to be partial to one who has all his life-time appeared very zealous in contrary principles to those of a party which they by some means have been supposed to favour. My Lord Lansdown,

Lansdown, by making me a present so noble as never has been made by a Subject to any Author now living, sufficiently declared, that what I had written had not been altogether displeasing to him. And it is to the warm approbation which the Duke of Buckingham gave to the Poem "on the Battle of Blenheim," that I owe the honour of being first known to the late illustrious Earl of Godolphin, whose good and great qualities, and the benefits which Great Britain received from his good and his wise administration, make me proud to own for the first and greatest of my benefactors.

Thus, Sir, I found encouragement to preserve these pieces, and especially the Poems written in the cause of Liberty. But I was convinced, at the same time, that the only way to preserve them would be to publish them together. They were in a great many different hands, and some of them in the hands of such who were mortal enemies to the cause in which they were written. Some of them had been very incorrectly printed. The very subject which ought to recommend them to all Englishmen, as well as the harmony without rhyme in several of the Poems, made some of them for the present less pleasing to above half the readers of Poetry. Some of them that had once appeared with applause seemed to have been forgotten. For all things of late days have been managed by cabal and party; and there seems to have been a conspiracy in the Commonwealth of Learning, among Fools of all sorts, to exalt Folly at the expence of Common-sense, and make Stupidity triumph over Merit in the dominions of Wit; which has been

one

one of the causes why things are reduced to that deplorable state upon our British Parnassus. Apollo and the Muses seem to have abandoned it; disdaining that their divinities should honour a place with their songs, where fools and pedants, buffoons, eunuchs, and tumblers, have so often met with applause.

Who could have thought, if he had been told twenty years ago that he should outlive Tragedy and Comedy, that he had been promised a life of not quite twenty years? Yet it is very plain, that the promise had extended no farther; such the power of cabal and party.

I have all along had a great aversion to the making a party, or the entering into a cabal; and have sometimes looked upon it with horror, and sometimes with contempt. Who that has common sense can forbear laughing, when he sees a parcel of fellows who call themselves Wits, sit in combination round a coffee-table, as sharpers do round a hazard-table, to trick honest gentlemen into an approbation of their works, and bubble them of their understanding?

And yet I have all along known, that nothing in the greater Poetry can grow immediately popular without a cabal or party. I have a long time been convinced that the more sublimely any thing is written in Poetry, and the nearer it comes to perfection, the longer it will be before it grows popular without such a cabal; because the more sublimely it is written, and the nearer it comes to perfection, the more it is raised above the apprehensions of the vulgar. And yet, notwithstanding this

this knowledge, I have all along resolved to have no reputation, or to owe it to my writings.

Thus Sir, you see the reasons why the writings that make up these two volumes, or at least the greater part of them, had been in danger of being lost, if I had not taken pains during my life-time to correct and publish them together. There is one more reason remaining, and that is, the malice of those people whom the world calls Poets, whose hatred I have been proud to incur, by speaking bold and necessary truths in the behalf of a noble art, which they have miserably abused by their vile poems, and their more vile criticisms.

And yet it is from these people that the foolish readers of Poetry, which are nine parts in ten, take their opinions of Poets and their works; little believing, or once imagining, that these persons are of all mankind the very worst qualified to judge of their own art; as having neither the capacity nor the impartiality which are requisite for the judging truly: for it will be found, generally speaking, that Poets, Painters, and Musicians, are capacitated less than other men to judge of Poetry, Painting, and Music. This, I must confess, may appear to some to be so bold a paradox, that I shall endeavour to make it out both by reason and authority; though I know very well, at the same time, that you can make no doubt of it. The generality of Poets, Painters, and Musicians, are such by the mere power of a warm imagination. And it is very rarely that a strong imagination and a penetrating judgment are found in the same subject. We need

go no further than Boileau to hear that a celebrated Poet is often a contemptible judge:

Tel excelle à rimer qui juge sottement,
Et tel s' est fait par ses vers distinguer par la ville,
Qui jamais du Lucain n' a distingué Virgile.

As for what relates to Painters, I shall content myself with the citation of a remark from the ingenious and judicious Author of the "Observations upon Fresnoy's Art of Painting," translated by Mr. Dryden. It is the fiftieth remark upon these words of Mr. Dryden's translation, 'as being the sovereign judge of his own art.'

"This word, Sovereign Judge or Arbiter of his own Art, pre-supposes a Painter to be fully instructed in all the parts of Painting; so that, being set as it were above his art, he may be the master and sovereign of it, which is no easy matter. Those of that profession are so seldom endowed with that supreme capacity, that few of them arrive to be good judges of Painting: and I should many times make more account of their judgment who are men of sense, and yet have never touched a pencil, than of the opinions which are given by the greatest parts of Painters. All Painters therefore may be called arbiters of their own art; but to be sovereign arbiters belongs only to knowing Painters."

What is said by this ingenious gentleman of Painters, is exactly true of Musicians: for which I have the opinion of more than one Master among them; and as to the truth of this observation with relation to Poets, I have said enough above.

But

But as Poets are not capable, so neither are they impartial judges. I speak of those who are only Rhimesters. For a great Master is for the most part as impartial as he is knowing; but for the rest, the readers of Poetry would do well to consider, that if a mistress who is courted by a great many passionate rivals should ask any one of them his opinion of the rest, it is ten to one that he would prefer him most whom he esteemed least, and whom he believed least capable of getting that mistress from him.

Thus, Sir, have I acquainted you with the motive which obliged me to write the greater part of these treatises, and which afterwards engaged me to publish them in the two volumes which you will receive with this. I hope I shall not be thought troublesome, if in a second letter I say something in particular of the pieces both in verse and prose. However, these two letters will convince you of the good opinion which I have a long time entertained both of your discernment and your impartiality.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble
and most obedient servant,
JOHN DENNIS.

430. FROM MR. CIBBER*.

SIR, SEPT. 29, 1719.

WHILE the World was under the daily correction and authority of your *Lucubrations*, their influence on the publick was not more visible in any one instance than the sudden improvement (I might say reformation) of the Stage that immediately followed them: from whence it is now apparent, that many Papers (which the grave and severe then thought thrown away upon that subject) were, in your speaking to the Theatre, still advancing the same work, and instructing the same world in miniature; to the end that, whenever you thought fit to be silent, the Stage, as you had amended it, might, by a kind of substituted power, continue to posterity your peculiar manner of making the improvement of their minds their public diversion.

Nothing but a Genius so universally revered could, with such candour and penetration, have pointed out its faults and misconduct, and so effectually have redeemed its uses and excellence from prejudice and disfavour. How often have we known the most excellent Audiences drawn together at a day's warning, by the influence or warrant of a single *Tatler*, in a season when our best endeavours without it could not defray the charge of the performance! This powerful and innocent

* This was *Cibber's Dedication* to Sir Richard Steele, of "*Ximenes*, or The Heroic Daughter, a Tragedy, 1719."

artifice

artifice soon recovered us into fashion, and spirited us up to think such new favour of our Auditors worthy of our utmost industry: and it is to that industry, so instructed, the Stage now owes its reputation and prosperity: and therefore, as I have heard you say (which I hope will justify my repeating it), "to talk of suppressing the Stage, because the licentiousness, ignorance, or poverty, of its former professors may have abused the proper ends of its institution, were, in Morality, as absurd a violence, as it would be in Religion to silence the pulpit, because sedition or treason has been preached there." And though for the same reason our ancient Legislature may have been justly provoked to mention such Actors in terms of ignominy, yet that ought no more to be a reproach to his Majesty's present Company of Comedians, than it is to the Patriots of old Rome, that their first founders were robbers and outlaws.

After such benefits received, what less return could the gratitude and interest of the Actors think of, than to intreat you to join in their petition to the Crown, to set you at their head *, that you might as justly partake of the profits as the praise and merit of supporting them? How much you have done for us was visible to all the world; what sense we have of it is yet known to few. I therefore take this occasion to make our acknowledgments, if possible, as public as our obligations.

The good you have done mankind gives every sensible heart a double delight; that of the bene-

* See "Cibber's Statement of the Conduct of the Theatre under the Patent granted to Sir Richard Steele."

fit

fit itself, and the pleasure of thanking you: and yet if we consider the world as one person, we cannot but say it has been ungrateful to you. Had *public spirit* been the measure of *public bounty*, it had been no Court-secret, how you had so suddenly run into an affluence of fortune; every peasant might have accounted for that, though the speculations of a gentleman may be puzzled at the contrary. But when a *private* man, in the service of his Country, exerts a genius and courage that would better become his *superiors*, we are not to wonder, if (in right of their precedency) neglect or envy should reprimand his forwardness into manners and modesty. He is to be talked to in another style than he thinks of; and is to know the dignity of office is so sacred in its nature, that it is a sort of influence for a man to be wise before he comes into it; that great actions are not to thrust themselves into public service without order or direction; they ought properly, and only, to come from the hands of high birth or station; and the honour of our national spirit is not to be sullied, by owing its greatest instances to the ignoble head or heart of a Commoner. Would not one think, Sir, from your situation in the world, all this had been said to you? But so it is, when a man's services are too eminent for his station, that eminence is generally his reward; he then stands the public gaze of passengers, like a mountain in a meadow, *deserted*, *poor*, and *thirsty*, while the lands below him are watered into *fatness* and *plenty*. Had it been your humble choice to have lain in the common *level* of merit, your crop had of course been as full as your neighbours.

neighbours. But, if you think the world is to go out of its road for you, you will be told, "nobody can help your being in the wrong; you have had examples enough before you, that might have warned you into wiser observations." Did not the celebrated Author of Hudibras bring the King's enemies into a lower contempt with the sharpness of his wit, than all the terrors of his administration could reduce them to? Was not his book always in the pocket of his Prince? And what did the mighty prowess of this Knight-errant amount to? Why—he died, with the highest esteem of the Court—in a garret! Might not the corruption of those times have farther informed you too, that though a man had all the spirit and capacity of an antient Roman for the service of his Country; yet, if he would not enslave those talents to the will and dominion of some great Leader in the State, if he would not privately list in his troop, and implicitly obey orders, he was treated at best as a mutineer, and came off well if he was only cashiered, and made incapable of future preferment? Such, Sir, was then the language and practice of the world; and how much soever it may be mended now, it gives but a melancholy reflection to know, that while in the late Reign you were warmly supporting our staggering hopes of the Protestant Succession, the enemies of it, then in power, were subtle enough to offer you a security of fortune, only to be *silent*. An uncomfortable account—that even the *forbearance of a virtue* should be worth more than the *use* of it.

But I am not to forget, there has been a circumstance in your merit too, that could have happened to

to no man but yourself. To say you had hazarded your life, or fortune, for the service of your Country, were but to allow you praise in common with thousands that have done the same: but, when we consider how *amiable a fame* you sacrificed to its interests, it would be barbarous not to inquire into the value of it. How long and happily did *old Isaac* triumph in the universal love and favour of his Readers? The grave, the chearful, the wise, the witty, old, young, rich, and poor, all sorts, though ever so opposite in character, whether beaux or bishops, rakes or men of business, coquets or statesmen, whigs or tories, all were equally his friends, and thought their tea in a morning had not its taste without him. Thus, while you appeared the *agreeable Philosopher* only, mankind by a general assent came into your applause and service. And yet, how in a moment was this calm and unrivalled enjoyment blown into the air, when the apprehension of your Country's being in a flame called upon you to resign it, by employing the same spirit of conviction in the restless office of a *Patriot!* for no sooner did you rise the champion of our insulted Constitution, than one half of the Nation (that had just before allowed you the proper *Censor* of our morals) in an instant denied you to have had either *wit, sense,* or *genius*; the *column* they had been two years jointly raising to your reputation was then, in as few days, thrown down by the implacable hands that raised it. But, when they found no attacks of prejudice could deface the real beauty of your Writings, and that they *still* recovered from the blow, their malice then

indeed

indeed was driven to its last hold, of giving the chief merit of them to another great Author, who they allowed had never so audaciously provoked them: this was indeed turning your own cannon upon you, and making use of your private virtue to depreciate your character; for, had not the diffusive benevolence of your heart thought even *fame* too great a good to be possessed *alone*, you would never (as you confessed in the Preface to those works) have taken your nearest friend into a share of it. A man of *modern prudence* would have considered a *fame* so *peculiar*, as a mistress whom *his* services only had deserved; and would have maturely deliberated, before he trusted her constancy in private, with the dearest friend upon earth. Your enemies, therefore, thus knowing that your own consent had partly justified their insinuations, saved a great deal of their malice from being ridiculous, and fairly left you to apply to such your singular conduct, what Mark Antony says of Octavius in the Play—

'Fool that I was! upon my *Eagle's* wings
'I bore this *Wren**, till I was tired with soaring,
'And now, he mounts above me—' DRYDEN.

* The following satirical lines, occasioned by this passage, were printed in "Mist's Journal," Oct. 31, 1719.

"Thus Colley Cibber greets his partner Steele,
See here, Sir Knight, how I 've outdone Corneille!
See here, how I, my Patrons to inveigle,
Make Addison a Wren, and you an Eagle!
Safe to their silent shades we bid defiance,
For living Dogs are better than dead Lions."

Nothing

Nothing is more common among the prudent men of this world, than their admiration that you will not (with all your talents) be guided to the proper steps of making your fortune: as if that were the *non ultra* of happiness. Can they suppose that flattery, deceit, and treachery, or the perpetual surrender of our reason, will, and freedom, to the convenience and passions of others, with a train of the like abject servilities, if your spirit could stoop to them, are not as soon attained to as their contrary virtues; and that consequently it is much easier to *make* a fortune, than to *deserve* one? Such men can never know how much the conscious transport of having done their duty is preferable to all the mean, unwieldy pomp of arrogant and unmerited prosperity. But let them hug themselves, and count their happiness by their sums of gold. Yours is, to know the service you have done your Country has contributed to their being secure in the possession of it, and that such (however unfashionable actions) are (like their gold) intrinsically valuable only for their weight, which can neither rise nor fall from the stamp of favour or discouragement. And that these men may not suppose you did not, as well as the wisest of them, foresee this barren consequence of your endeavours, I shall beg leave to quote a prophetic instance to the contrary, which you published in No. II. of a Paper, called "The Reader," in the year 1714.

"There was a certain husbandman, in a certain kingdom, who lived in a certain place, under a certain hill, near a certain bridge. This poor man was a little of a scholar, and given to country learning, such

such as astrological predictions of the weather, and the like. One night, in one of his musings about his house, he saw a party of soldiers, belonging to a prince in enmity with his own, coming towards the bridge: he immediately ran, and drew up that part which is called the draw-bridge; and calling all his family, and getting his cattle together, he put his plough, behind that his stools, and his chairs behind them, and by this means stopped the march till it was day-light, when all the neighbouring lords and gentlemen saw the enemy as well as he. They crowded on with great gallantry to oppose the foe; and, in their zeal and hurry throwing our husbandman over-bridge, and his goods after him, effectually kept out the invaders. This accident (says my Author) was the safety of that kingdom; yet no one ought to be discomfited from the public service, for what had happened to this rustick; for though he was neglected at the present, and every man said he was an honest fellow, that he was no one's enemy but his own in exposing his all, and that nobody said he was every one's friend but his own, the man had ever after the liberty, that he, and no other but he and his family, should beg on that bridge in all times following."

Had you not published this prediction so many years ago, the art or malice of men might have insinuated, that the hope of some farther reward, than that of the action itself, had been the motive to your zeal for the then endangered *Protestant* Succession.

But, alas! I fear I am running into the same public-spirited rashness; it being impossible to speak truth of you, without giving shame to others, who

who may not perhaps have your talent of easily forgiving whatever is honest in its intention. I shall therefore beg leave to subscribe myself, Sir,

Your most devoted humble servant,

COLLEY CIBBER.

431. TO THE EARL OF OXFORD *.

CONCERNING THE BILL OF PEERAGE.

" Rarus enim fermè sensus communis in illâ
" Fortunâ." Juv.

MY LORD, [1719.]

I AM very glad of an occasion wherein I have the good fortune to think the same way with your

* Robert Harley, esq. eldest son of Sir Edward Harley, born Dec. 5, 1661. At the Revolution, Sir Edward and his son Robert raised a troop of horse at their own expence. On the accession of King William, Mr. Harley was elected member for Tregony; and afterward for Radnor, which he represented till called to the Upper House. Feb. 11, 1701-2, he was chosen Speaker; as he was again, 31 Dec. following; and a third time, in the first parliament of Queen Anne. April 17, 1704, he was sworn of the Privy Council; and, May 18 following, appointed Secretary of State, being still Speaker of the House of Commons. His office of Secretary he resigned, Feb. 12, 1707-8. He was made a Commissioner of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, Aug. 10, 1710, and three days after sworn again of the Privy Council; where, March 8, 1711, his life was attacked by Guiscard: the address of both houses of parliament will best shew the sense of the nation at that alarming attempt. Her Majesty, in reward for his many services, was graciously pleased to advance him to the peerage, by the title of

Baron

Lordship, because I have very long suffered a great deal of pain in reflecting upon a certain virulence

Baron Harley, Earl of Oxford, and Earl Mortimer, May 11, 1711: on the 29th, he was appointed Lord Treasurer; August 15, chosen Governor of the South Sea Company, of which he had been the founder; and Oct. 26, 1712, was honoured with the Garter. July 27, 1714, he resigned the Treasurer's staff. June 10, 1715, his Lordship was impeached by the House of Commons; and though it is not strictly true that he was dismissed without a trial, it actually was so in effect, the Commons having declined appearing to make good their charge. His Lordship's situation was somewhat singular. The articles of impeachment against him were carried up July 9, 1715, when he was committed to the Tower. On August 2, additional articles were sent up; on the 3d of September his Lordship's answer was delivered; and on the 19th the House of Commons joined issue by replication. After several adjournments, the Parliament re-assembled Jan. 9, 1715; and continued sitting until June 26, 1716, when an end was put to the session by a prorogation. Feb. 20, 1717, a new session was opened. May 22, the Earl, being still in confinement, petitioned the House of Peers to take the circumstances of his case into consideration, "being assured it was not their Lordships' intention that his "confinement should be indefinite." The petition having been referred to a Committee, who made their report May 25, it was agreed by the House, that the "impeachment was *not determined* "by the prorogation." The day for trial was accordingly fixed, first for June 13, and, at the desire of the Commons, deferred till the 24th, on which day it actually commenced. The charge was opened by Mr. Hampden, and Sir Joseph Jekyll began to proceed to make good the first article of the impeachment; but the Upper House having resolved, "that the Commons should "not be admitted to proceed, in order to make good their arti-"cles for high crimes and misdemeanors, till judgment were first "given on the articles for high treason," the Managers for the Commons proceeded no farther that day. Several conferences having been held on the subject, without effect, the Upper House proceeded on the trial July 1; and, after proclamation for all persons concerned to take notice that the Earl of Oxford stood

on

with which my zeal has heretofore transported me to treat your Lordship's person and character. I do protest to you, excepting in the first smart of my disgrace and expulsion out of the House of Commons, I never writ any thing that ought to displease you but with a reluctant heart, and in opposition to much good-will and esteem for your many great and uncommon talents. And I take the liberty to say thus publicly to yourself what I have often said to others on the subject of my behaviour to you; I never had any other reason to lessen my Lord of Oxford than that which Brutus had to stab Cæsar—the love of my Country. Your Lordship will, I hope, believe, there cannot be a more voluntary, unconstrained reparation made to a man, than that I now make to you, in begging your pardon thus publicly for every thing I have spoken or written to your disadvantage, foreign to the argument and cause which I was then labouring to support. You will please to believe, that I could not be so insensible as not to be touched with the generosity of part of your conduct towards me, or have omitted to acknowledge it accordingly, if I had not thought that your very virtue was dangerous, and that it was (as the world then stood) absolutely necessary to depreciate so adventurous a Genius, surrounded with so much power as your Lordship then had. I

on his trial, that they might come forth to make good their charge; and, the Commons not appearing, his Lordship was brought to the bar, acquitted of the articles, and all things therein contained; the impeachment was dismissed; and the following day his Lordship re-assumed his seat in Parliament. He died, in the 64th year of his age, May 21, 1724, after having been twice married.

transgressed,

transgressed, my Lord, against you, when you could make Twelve Peers in a day; I ask your pardon, when you are a private Nobleman; and, as I told you when I resigned the Stamp-office*, I wished you all prosperity consistent with the public good, so now I congratulate you upon the pleasure you must needs have in looking back upon the true fortitude with which you have passed through the dangers arising from the rage of the people, and the envy of the rest of the world. If to have rightly judged of men's passions and prejudices, vices and virtues, interests and inclinations, and to have waited with skill and courage for proper seasons and incidents to make use of them for a man's safety and honour, can administer pleasure to a man of sense and spirit, your Lordship has abundant cause of satisfaction.

In confidence that you will accept of my sorrow and repentance for the unprovoked liberties I have taken in my former writings, I make you my Patron in this present discourse† on the greatest occasion that has perhaps ever happened in England. Your Lordship will see I write in haste; and the necessity of pressing forward to be time enough to be of any use, will excuse the failures in style and expression. I shall therefore immediately fall into the matter of the Bill, which, I fear, may change this free State into the worst of all tyrannies, that

* See his former Letter, p. 283.

† His opposition to the Peerage Bill. It was during this opposition to the Court, that his licence for acting plays was revoked, and his patent rendered ineffectual, at the instance of the Lord Chamberlain. See the next Letter.

of

of an Aristocracy. I shall support my reasons for that terror, by running through the several parts of it, and making it appear that this is more likely than any other consequence that can be supposed will attend such a Law as this would be. The whole tenor of it is very unfortunately put together, if any thing but an additional power to the Peers is intended by it. RICH. STEELE.

432. TO THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE *.

VILLIERS-STREET, YORK-BUILDINGS,
JAN. 15, 1719-20.

MY MOST HONOURED LORD AND PATRON,

IF your Grace believes that it is as great to undo as to make a man, I am the unhappy instrument in both kinds; and, if it is a gratification to you, I have some consolation in the wretched distinction of being the only man the Duke of Newcastle ever injured. My high obligations to you temper my spirit; and, after some tumult of soul, and agony

* Originally printed in the eighth number of "The Theatre," with this introduction:—Sir, Your last Paper having descended to the case of particular men who are concerned in the Theatre, I hope you will allow me the advantage of being represented to the Town by your means, and of conveying my thoughts to a noble person, who has forbid me, without any fault of mine, ever to approach him, either by speech or writing, as long as we live; but you will understand me better by reading what I know not how to convey him, unless you will please to print it."

of

of the worst passions in it, I behold you in the pleasing light you have heretofore appeared to me *. I make you allowance for the disadvantage of youth and prosperity, and my benefactor covers my oppressor. As this last word must needs give offence to a noble nature, it stands upon me to make out my complaint, and shew all the world, for all the world will be curious in this case, as obscure as I am, for I have ceased to be so since I have been distinguished by your Grace's displeasure.

The patent which I have from his Majesty makes me the sole Governor of a company of Comedians for my life; and that franchise is to subsist in those who claim under me three years after my death. There is nothing in it, as to the bestowing part from the Crown, but what are mere transcripts of the patent given by King Charles to Sir William Davenant; and, though I might have had it to myself as well as he, I made a conscience and scruple of asking for my heirs, an office that required a very particular turn and capacity to execute. It is not, my Lord, very common in Courts, for a man to ask less, when he knows he may obtain more; the very night I received it, I participated the power and use of it, with relation to the profits that should arise from it, between the gentlemen who invited me into the licence upon his Majesty's happy accession to the Throne; and it has flourished in all manner of respects to a degree unknown in any former time. When your Grace came to be Chamberlain, from a generous design of making every office

* See a former Letter to this Nobleman, in 1714, whilst Earl of Clare, p. 379.

and authority the better for your wearing, your Grace was induced to send for me and the other sharers, and in an absolute manner offered us a licence, and demanded a resignation of the patent, which I presumed as absolutely to refuse. This refusal I made in writing, and petitioned the King for his protection in the grant which he had given me. This matter rested thus for many months; and the next molestation we received was by an order, signed by your Grace, to dismiss Mr. Cibber. The actors obeyed; but I presumed to write to your Grace against it, and expressed my sorrow that you would give me no better occasion of shewing my duty but by bearing oppression from you. This freedom produced a message by your kinsman and secretary, whom I treated with as much deference and respect as any man living could do the Duke of Newcastle coming from the King. This message was, in your Grace's name, to forbid me ever to write, speak, or visit you more. The gentleman, I dare say, has told you, that I answered him almost in these very words:

"Sir, I beg of you to take notice of my manner, my voice, and my gesture, when I answer to this severe message; and let the Duke of Newcastle know, that with the most profound submission and humility I received it, and protested to you, that I could have no message from any Family, except the Royal one, that could give me half this mortification. If I have not fallen into phrases that speak me truly sorrowful and humble, use any you yourself can think of which are more so, and you will then best express my meaning. At the same time you may

may very truly say, that if any other man were Chamberlain, and should send me such a message, my reply should be as haughty as it is now humble."

He left me with a farther declaration, "that my patent should be prosecuted according to Law."

I rested as well satisfied as one who had lost so powerful a friend could, from a security in a still greater power, that of the Laws of the Land; but I was soon after awakened out of this slumber, which was far from being an easy one, by hearing that your Grace had sent for Mr. Booth, and threatened a signed manual, which must necessarily disable me as to my defence, before you would proceed against me according to Law. I did your Grace the justice to think it impossible for you to be prevailed upon to do that. I assure your Grace, the great name on the top of the Paper did not give me more terror than the name at the bottom did sorrow. The Minister who subscribes, is answerable for what the King writes. Our Laws make our Prince author of nothing but favour to his subjects. My patent cannot be hurt, except it can be proved it was obtained *per deceptionem*, as, according to my duty, I am to believe this order, for it does, by an artificial method in its effect, destroy by his signed manual, what is granted by his great seal, which had been impossible to be brought about, had the matter been fairly represented. All I could do was, to represent it by petition, which I delivered in your Grace's presence on Friday night, the prayer of which was: "Votre suppliant donc prie très humblement vôtre Majesté, qu'il ne reçoive aucune molestation, que par la Loye en juste forme de procès;" your

petitioner therefore most humbly prays, he may not be any way molested but by due course of Law. I know not by what accident it happened that my petition was never read, but the next news I heard was the order of revocation. But I must take the liberty to say, that his Majesty must grant the ruffians mentioned in the last proclamation, which is denied unhappy me, a trial by due course of Law. The revocation came on the Saturday; your Grace was so good as not to break the Sabbath upon me; but the sufficient evil of this day, being Monday, is an order of silence. Your Grace will please to read them both over again, which are to this effect:

" Whereas by our Royal Licence, bearing date the 18th day of October, 1714, We did give and grant unto Richard Steele, Esq. now Sir Richard Steele, Knt. Mr. Robert Wilks, Mr. Colley Cibber, Mr. Thomas Dogget, and Mr. Barton Booth, full power, licence, and authority, to form, constitute, and establish, a Company of Comedians: And having received information of great misbehaviours committed by our Company of Comedians now acting at the Theatre in Drury Lane: Therefore, for reforming the Comedians, and for establishing the just and ancient authority of the Officers of our Houshold, and more especially of our Chamberlain, We have thought fit to revoke the abovementioned Licence. And we do further (as much as in us lies, and as by Law we may) revoke and make void all other licences, powers, and authorities whatsoever, and at any time heretofore given by us to the said Sir Richard Steele, Robert Wilks, Colley Cibber, Thomas

Thomas Dogget, and Barton Booth, or to any of them severally."

In pursuance of this, your Grace proceeds thus:

"Whereas his Majesty has thought fit, by his Letters of Revocation, bearing date the 23d day of January, 1719, (for divers weighty reasons therein contained) to revoke his Royal Licence: For the effectual prevention of any future misbehaviour, in obedience to his Majesty's commands, I do, by virtue of my office of Chamberlain of his Majesty's Houshold, hereby discharge you the said Managers and Comedians at the said Theatre in Drury-lane in Covent-garden from further acting. Given under my hand and seal, this 25th day of January, 1719.

"To the Gentlemen managing the Company of Comedians at the Theatre in Drury-lane in Covent-garden, and to all the Comedians and Actors there."

It is observable, that though his Majesty took great care to express himself, according to his gracious inclination, with much reserve and care that nothing but the Law should hurt his poor subject, in the words "as much as in us lies, and as by Law we may," your Grace has been prevailed upon to supply the defective hardship. I shall not say more, or make stronger observations upon what you have signed; for my love to you will not let me call this an act of yours, as my duty to my Prince will not let me call it an act of his. I wish your Grace had been as careful as he in leaving me to the Law. But, if you will allow me to ask you one favour, before you have quite broke my heart and spirit, give me but the name of your adviser, that is to say, your

your Lawyer, on this occasion; and you shall see that it is not for want of skill in life that I am subjected to all the pains and punishments to which those wicked ones are exposed who are described by the monosyllable "Poor." When I know who has made your Grace thus injure the best Master and best Servant that ever man had, I will teach him the difference between Law and Justice; he shall soon understand, that he who advises how to escape the Law and do injustice to his fellow-subject, is an agent of Hell; such a man, for a larger fee, would lend a dark-lanthorn to a murderer, which would be but the same iniquity practised in a higher degree, that would be more cruel, but not more unjust. When I am sure who he is, I shall with justice use him, as he does with injustice use me; I shall so far imitate him as to be within the Law, when I am endeavouring to starve him. I hope he is poor, by selling poison to get himself food *.

But I fear I grow transported beyond the respect that is due to your Grace's presence; and protest to you, in the most solemn manner, that, rather than never to be well with you more, were myself and family only concerned in it, I would this moment resign my patent for any employment of less profit that you would procure me; but my obligations to your Grace will not discharge those which I am under to the rest of the world. I would not hurt

* This lawyer was Sir Thomas Pengelly, some time Chief Baron of the Exchequer court, whose name he dissects thus: *Pen* is the Welsh word for head, *Guelt* the Dutch word for money, which, with the English word *Ly*, express one who turns his head to lye for money. See "The Theatre," No IX. and XI.

any

any man now in India for the favour of the greatest man in England, or give up a door-keeper of the Play-house to make myself so *. Therefore your

* This application proving ineffectual, Steele published soon after "The State of the Case between the Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty's Houshold, and the Governor of the Royal Company of Comedians. With the opinions of Pemberton, Northey, and Parker, concerning the Theatre." In this pamphlet he states the account of his loss by this proceeding, as follows:

	£.	s.	d.
Six hundred pounds a-year for life, moderately valued, amounts to — — —	6000	0	0
Three years after my life — —	1800	0	0
My share in the scenes, stock, &c. —	1000	0	0
The profit of acting my own plays already written, or which I may write — —	1000	0	0
Total £.	9800	0	0

He then declares he never did one act to provoke this attempt; nor, says he, does the Chamberlain pretend to assign any direct reason of forfeiture; but openly and wittingly declares he will ruin Steele; "which, in a man in his circumstances against one in mine, is as great as the humour of Malagene, in the Comedy, who valued himself upon his activity in tripping up cripples. All this is done against a man to whom Whig, Tory, Roman Catholic, Dissenter, Native, Foreigner, owe zeal and good-will for good offices endeavoured towards every one of their civil rights; and their kind wishes for him are but a just return. But what ought to weigh most with his Lordship the Chamberlain, is my zeal for his Master; of which I shall at present say no more than that his Lordship and many others may perhaps have done more for the House of Hanover than I have; but I am the only man in his Majesty's dominions who did all he could." State of the Case, &c. p. 30. It is observable that our Author's firm friend Mr. Walpole was at this time in disfavour at Court, having resigned his post of First Commissioner of the Treasury on the 10th of April, 1717, and was not replaced till April 2, 1721; presently after which, viz. on the 18th of May following, Sir Richard was also restored to his office of Comptroller of the Theatre.

Grace,

Grace, I hope, will forgive me, that, to gratify you, I do not consign to distress and poverty above sixty families, who all live comfortably, many of them plentifully, under my present jurisdiction. When I resign them, they may be governed by your Grace's successor in your office as they have been by your predecessor *, according to humour and caprice, and not reason and justice. In their defence and my own, I deny all allegations of voluntary neglect imputed to me or them, or undue demands made upon the subject by me or them; and shall always, with safety to my honour, and duty to the rest of the world, and no other reserve, be,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obliged, most devoted, and obedient humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

433. TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR †.

MY LORD, JAN. 17, 1719-20.

THAT you were Lord Chief Justice, was a consideration which gave me much resolution in the last reign; that you are Chancellor, is a comfort to me under much hardships in this. I have, my Lord, a ..... by letters Patent from his Majesty, to keep and govern a company of Comedians:

* The Duke of Bolton was the predecessor; the Duke of Grafton the successor.

† Thomas Lord Parker; Lord Chief Justice of the King's-Bench 1710; Lord Chancellor 1718; created Earl of Macclesfield 1721.

the

the tenure is for my life, and three years after my death. My Lord Chamberlain thinks his office injured in this grant, and disturbs me in it. His Grace has already sent an order to silence one of the chief Actors; upon which I wrote to him, and complained of the oppression which I took the liberty of it. Upon this I received a message by his Secretary, never to write or speak to him more during our natural lives. His Grace has since declared, he will obtain a sign manual to silence the Theatre. I cannot, by his own order, expostulate with him; therefore am obliged to apply to other Lords of the Council, to prevent the grant of such an instrument. My Lord has acquainted me, that this Patent of mine shall be disputed in Westminster-hall; which I am very glad of, and am ready to defend myself; but cannot do so, if my means of doing it are taken from me, and the cause is in effect to begin at the latter end of it, and, by the interposition of the King's name and authority, I am to be bereaved in a summary and arbitrary way of what I am to dispute according to the rules of justice.

I presume to write to the other great Officers of the Crown on this subject; and hope I shall not be distinguished by receiving injustice with relation to the Playhouse, as I have been by right justice in case of omission of duty in the Commission of Forfeitures *. I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

* For which he incurred, and paid a penalty of 500*l*; see pp. 554, 572.

434. TO

434. TO THE DUKE OF ARGYLE *.

MY LORD, JAN. 17, 1719-20.

I AM necessitated to be guilty of this presumption, from a menace of my Lord Chamberlain, that he would silence the Theatre under my government by a sign manual, though at the same time he has sent me word by his Secretary that he will prosecute my Patent according to Law.

I have not the honour of your Grace's friendship; and therefore want a powerful man who knows superiority is maintained only by benefaction, and that no man is truly above a Gentleman of England, but merely in a ceremonial and insipid way, but he who is ready to favour, protect, and defend him.

This, my Lord, is what you are well known to understand and perform with a frankness and beauty which very few are capable to imitate. But, as I have no pretension to such protection and patronage from you, I only apply to you, as you are a Privy Councillor, for justice; and humbly beg of you, to grant me so far your observation (as it may come before you either in business or conversation) should a step be made; but I shall not omit to tell you, who know human life, and have reason about you, in spite of being a man of immense fortune, and the highest title I can say to you, that this attack at the Playhouse and the penalty of taking from me 500*l.* for my absence from Scotland, has extremely reduced my finances and credit.

* John Campbell, Duke of Argyle and Greenwich.

Forgive

Forgive me, my Lord, for this application to you, which proceeds from a deep sense of your many noble qualities which make me (though I speak it when I am a petitioner), my Lord, with great truth,

Your Grace's most obedient
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

435. TO JAMES CRAGGS *, ESQ.

SIR, JAN. 17, 1719-20.

I PRESUME to give you this trouble in hopes of your protection, as you are a Privy Councillor, against what his Grace my Lord Chamberlain is pleased to threaten, contrary to the rules of justice. My Lord is instigated to dispute the King's authority in giving me a Patent for the government of the Playhouse; and has sent me word he will go to law with me on that subject, but at the same time menaces to silence the House by his Majesty's sign manual. I insist upon it that it will be an arbitrary application of the sign manual; and doubt not but you will, in duty to your Sovereign and justice to your fellow subjects, if it should fall to your province to be consulted, avert this calamity from, Sir,

Your most obedient
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

* This was the "Statesman, yet Friend to Truth," who is so justly complimented by Mr. Pope. He was made Secretary of State in 1718; and died Feb. 14, 1720.

436. TO

436. TO EARL STANHOPE *.

MY LORD, JAN. 17, 1719-20.

I AM obliged to give your Lordship this trouble on occasion of a menace from my Lord Chamberlain, that he will silence the Actors under my government by his Majesty's Letters Patent, though at the same time he has notified to me by his Secretary, that he will proceed against this little theatrical authority according to Law †, I presume to assert

* An old friend and patron of Steele; see p. 338.

† The following Dialogue, which is said to have passed in or about 1719, between Sir Richard Steele and the Earl of Sunderland, first Lord Commissioner of the Treasury from 1718 to 1721 (whether genuine or not) is characteristic; and is here transcribed from Ralph's "Case of Authors by Profession."

"STEELE. I beg your pardon, my Lord—Though such as you seldom remember, such as I seldom forget————And I must now beg leave to put you in mind of what you have told me over and over again—That you thought Dick Steele had almost as good pretensions as Bob Walpole—That it was unpardonable in one who had been my right-hand man at the bar of the House, to turn his back on me when at the head of the Treasury—and that when you came to be Minister all should be made up to me.

Lord SUNDERLAND. I did; I did sure enough—But, my dear Sir Richard—

STEELE. My Lord—my Lord—I know what you would say; and I will save you the trouble of saying it—I am of the miller's mind—The fault is in the mill—in more senses than one.

Lord SUNDERLAND. What mill? I do not understand you.

STEELE. Afford me a little patience, my Lord, and I will make you understand me—A poor country-fellow, coming too late on a Saturday-evening to the mill with his corn to be ground, found the miller had shut up, and was jogging home—This was a sorry

that a Sign Manual on such an occasion is illegal and arbitrary; and humbly desire your Lordship

a sorry sight, as Macbeth says—Bread for himself and family for the next week was the point in question: the miller was a churl, and not easy to be talked into any thing—However, he did his best, scratched his ears, told his tale, and so far with success, that he obtained the custody of the mill, with leave to grind for himself; on condition, he did justice to the crib, and paid the same toll, as if the miller had done the job himself—The fellow promised like any Minister, my Lord, and performed accordingly—for, going to the till, with an honest purpose, as he thought, to pay the miller his due, he found such a quantity of grist lodged there already, that he could not resist the temptation which assailed him, to take twice as much away as he had been enjoined to add—But here the parallel fails, my Lord; for, on his return home, his heart smote him—He could not sleep all night; he could not eat all day—And at last, he found himself under an irresistible impulse to make restitution—The miller, in the mean time, having examined his crib, and seeing him approach with a sack on his back as before, took it for granted, he was come to repeat his experiment, and resolved to give him a suitable reception; but was not allowed time enough—For the poor penitent made all the haste he could to confess the fraud, and with tears of contrition discharged the load at his feet——

This melted the miller into another mood; and, having paused upon the matter a moment or two, 'Gum, gum, said he, tak hart, mun! tak hart!—The vaate's in the mill—I do knau it is—Why mun, I was as honest as the day, when I com'd into it vurst—And now—Sha't ha' the Grist—sha't! For, mun, wur I to do as thee ha'st done, should not ha' a bed to lye on.'

Lord SUNDERLAND. Ha, ha, ha! you were always a wag, Sir Richard,—ha, ha, ha!

STEELE. To be serious then for once, my Lord—Knaves take care of themselves—and fools are undone by relying on other people's promises."

"Addison," Mr. Ralph adds, "and his advancement hardly need be mentioned, the instance is so notorious; but every body may not so readily recollect, that his party-services contributed more to it, than all his laudable efforts to refine our manners and perfect our taste."

will,

will, in a Ministerial capacity, protest against such an insult upon the property of, Sir,

Your most obedient,
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

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437. FROM MR. DENNIS *.

SIR, MARCH 4, 1719-20.

THOUGH, at the time of writing this, I am almost overwhelmed both with sickness and grief, yet I cannot forbear making a just complaint to you, for your being the occasion of both these, either by actually breaking your word with me †, or being

* Directed, "To Sir Richard Steele, Patentee of the Theatre in Drury-lane."

† A former complaint of Mr. Dennis may here not improperly be introduced:

"July 28, 1710. Sir, I sent a letter on the 28th to your house, directed to Captain Steele, and desiring to see him that night, that I might have his advice upon a business of importance; softly intimating at the same time, that it was not in my power to wait upon him. But, having neither seen him nor heard from him, I fancy that my old friend is departed, and some gentleman has succeeded him in the old house, with the same name and the same martial title; a chance that happens oftener in the world than some people imagine. How should I have been surprized, in case I had gone myself, expecting, from the similitude of name and title, to have seen my old acquaintance! how should I have been surprized, to have found a man with quite another mind, and quite another countenance! My old friend,

perfectly passive while your Managers broke it; which, if it has not reduced me to immediate necessity, yet has brought me within the danger of it, and consequently within the apprehension of it, which is as grievous almost as the thing. And that this complaint is but too justly grounded, you yourself will acknowledge, when I have laid my case before you, which I shall do in as few words as I can.

It was upon the 27th of February, 1717-8, that I received a letter from Mr. Booth, by your direction, and the direction of the Managers under you, desiring me to dine at your house on the 28th, and

friend, as I thought at least, had civility, had humanity, had a good and engaging officiousness; and as I did not take him to want good nature, so he had what the French call a good countenance, that is, the countenance of one who is pleased with him who talks to him. But, I suppose, I should have found nothing of all this in the noble Captain who succeeds him. You will say, perhaps, that you had no reason to make a visit to one whom you know not, and are resolved not to know. But then, noble Captain, you ought to have sent back my letter, and to have given me to understand that you are not the person that I took you for; that you should have enough to do, if you were obliged to own all the acquaintance of the Captain your predecessor; that I am not the first man who has made this mistake, and shall not probably be the last. Had you done this, I had had no replication to make to so equitable an answer. I should only perhaps have advised you, in order to the preventing some troublesome visits, and some impertinent letters, to cause an advertisement to be inserted in Squire Bickerstaff's next *Lucubrations*, by which the world might be informed, that the Captain Steele, who lives now in Bury-street, is not the Captain of the same name who lived there two years ago; and that the acquaintance of the military person who inhabited there formerly may go look for their old friend even where they can find him.

I am yours, &c. J. Dennis.

after

after dinner to read the tragedy of *Coriolanus* to you, which I had altered from Shakespeare. You cannot but remember, Sir, that, upon reading it, the Play with the alterations was approved of, nay, and warmly approved of, by yourself, Mr. Cibber, and Mr. Booth (the other Manager was not there); and that resolutions were taken for the acting it in the beginning of this winter. Now I appeal to yourself, if any Dramatic performance could be more seasonable, in the beginning of a winter when we were threatened with an invasion from Sweden on the North, and from Spain on the West, than a Tragedy whose moral is thus expressed in the last lines of the Play:

"——They, who thro' ambition or revenge,
Or impious interest, join with foreign foes,
T' oppress or to destroy their native country,
Shall find, like Coriolanus, soon or late,
From their perfidious foreign friends their fate."

I am sure, Sir, I need not tell one of your understanding, that this moral is so apparently the foundation of the Dramatic action, and must appear to every spectator and reader to be so truly the genuine result of it, that, if I had not said one word of it, every reader and spectator would have been able to have suggested so much to himself.

Well, Sir, when the winter came on, what was done by your Deputies? Why, instead of keeping their word with me, they spent above two months of the season in getting up "All for Love, or the World well Lost," a Play which has indeed a noble first act, an act which ends with a scene becoming of

of the dignity of the Tragic Stage. But, if Horace had been now alive, and been either a reader or spectator of that entertainment, he would have passed his old sentence upon the Author,

Infelix operis summi, quia ponere totum
Nesciet *.

For was ever any thing so pernicious, so immoral, so criminal, as the design of that Play? I have mentioned the title of it, give me leave to set before you the two last lines:

"And Fame to late posterity shall tell,
No lovers liv'd so great, or dy'd so well."

And this encomium of the conduct and death of Anthony and Cleopatra, a conduct so immoral, and a self-murder so criminal, is, to give it more force, put into the mouth of the high-priest of Isis; though that priest could not but know, that what he thus commended would cause immediately the utter destruction of his country, and make it become a conquered and a Roman province. Certainly never could the design of an Author square more exactly with the design of Whitehall, at the time when it was written, which was by debauching the people absolutely to enslave them.

For pray, Sir, what do the title and the two last lines of this Play amount to in plain English? Why

* "Unhappy in the whole, because unskill'd
To join the parts, and make them harmonize."
DUNCOMBE.

to this, that if any person of quality, or other, shall turn away his wife, his young, affectionate, virtuous, charming wife (for all these Octavia was), to take to his bed a loose, abandoned prostitute; and shall in her arms exhaust his patrimony, destroy his health, emasculate his mind, and lose his reputation and all his friends; why all this is well and greatly done, his ruin is his commendation. And if afterwards, in despair, he either hangs or drowns himself, or goes out of the world like a rat, with a dose of arsenick or sublimate, why it is a great and envied fate, he dies nobly and heroically.

It is, Sir, with extreme reluctance that I have said all this; for I would not be thought to affront the memory of Mr. Dryden, for whose extraordinary qualities no man has a greater veneration than myself. But that all considerations ought to give place to the public good, is a truth of which you and all men, I am sure, can never doubt.

And can you believe then, after having recommended virtue and public spirit for so many years to the world, that you can give your subalterns authority to preach up adultery to a town, which stands so little in need of their doctrine? Is not the chastity of the marriage-bed one of the chief incendiaries of public spirit, and the frequency of adulteries one of the chief extinguishers of it? according to that of Horace *:

Fœcunda culpæ secula, nuptias
Primum inquinavere, & genus, & domos.

* 3 Od. vi. 17.

Hoc

Hoc fonte derivata clades
In patriam populumque fluxit *.

For when adultery is become so frequent, especially among persons of condition, upon whose sentiments all public spirit chiefly depends, that a great many husbands begin to believe, or perhaps but to suspect, that they who are called their children are not their own; I appeal to you, Sir, if that belief, or that suspicion, must not exceedingly cool their zeal for the welfare of those children, and consequently for the welfare of posterity.

As I had infinitely the advantage of "All for Love" in the moral of "Coriolanus," I had it by consequence in the whole Tragedy; for the "Coriolanus," as I have altered it, having a just moral, and by consequence at the bottom a general and allegorical action, and universal and allegorical characters, and for that very reason a Fable, is therefore a true Tragedy, if it be not a just and a regular one; but it is as just and as regular as I could make it, upon so irregular a plan as Shakspeare's; whereas "All for Love" having no moral, and consequently no general and allegorical action, nor general and allegorical characters, can for that reason have no fable, and therefore can be no Tragedy. It is indeed only a particular account of what happened formerly to Anthony and Cleopatra, and a most pernicious amusement.

* "Fruitful of crimes, this age first stain'd
Their hapless offspring, and profan'd
The nuptial bed, from whence the woes,
That various and unnumber'd rose
From this polluted fountain-head,
O'er Rome, and o'er the nations spread." FRANCIS.

And as I had the advantage in the merit of "Coriolanus," I had it likewise in the world's opinion of the merit and reputation of Shakspeare in Tragedy above that of Mr. Dryden. For let Mr. Dryden's genius for Tragedy be what it will, he has more than once publicly owned, that it was much inferior to Shakspeare's, and particularly in those two remarkable lines in his Prologue to "Aurenge-Zebe:"

"And when he hears his godlike Romans rage,
He in a just despair would quit the Stage;"

And in the verses to Sir Godfrey Kneller,

"Shakspeare, thy gift, I place before my sight:
With awe, I ask his blessing ere I write;
With reverence look on his majestic face,
Proud to be less, but of his godlike race."

And the same Mr. Dryden has more than once declared to me, that there was something in this very Tragedy of "Coriolanus," as it was written by Shakspeare, that is truly great and truly Roman; and I more than once answered him, that it had always been my own opinion. Now I appeal to You and your Managers, if it has lost any thing under my hands.

But what is more considerable than all this, your Deputy Lieutenants for the Stage have ten times the opinion of the advantage which Shakspeare has over Mr. Dryden in Tragedy than either I or the rest of the world have. Ever since I was capable of reading Shakspeare, I have always had, and have always expressed that veneration for him which is justly his due; of which I believe no one can doubt who

who has read the Essay which I published some years ago upon his Genius and Writings. But what they express upon all occasions is not esteem, is not admiration, but flat idolatry.

And, lastly, I had the advantage of the very opinion which those people had of their own interest in the case. They knew very well that it was but twelve years since "All for Love" had been acted. And they were likewise satisfied, that from its first run, as they call it, to the beginning of this last winter, it had never brought four audiences together. At the same time there was no occasion to tell them, that the "Coriolanus" of Shakspeare had not been acted in twenty years; and that, when it was brought upon the Stage twenty years ago, it was acted twenty nights together.

And now, Sir, I shall be obliged to you if you will acquaint me for what mighty and unknown reason the "Coriolanus," notwithstanding your words solemnly given to act it as soon as it could conveniently be brought upon the Stage this winter, notwithstanding the merit of the Play itself, I speak of Shakspeare's part of it, notwithstanding the world's and their own opinion of the superior merit of Shakspeare to Mr. Dryden in Tragedy, and their very opinion of their own interest in the case; nay, notwithstanding the exact seasonableness of the moral for the service of King George and of Great-Britain, which above all things ought to have been considered by those who call themselves the King's servants, and who act under his authority: I say, Sir, I should be extremely obliged to you if you would tell me what powerful reason could so far prevail

over

over all those I have mentioned, as to engage them to postpone the "Coriolanus," not only for "All for Love," but likewise for that lamentable tragic Farce "Cæsar Borgia *," from which nobody expected any thing but themselves: and a Comedy after it called "The Masquerade †," from which they themselves declared they expected nothing.

I am, &c. JOHN DENNIS."

438. FROM A LADY ‡.

MARCH 1, 1720.

IF I, O STEELE, presumptuous shall appear,
And these unskilful notes offend thy ear,
Forbear to censure what I've artless writ,
No well-bred man e'er damn'd a woman's wit.
But sure there's none of all th' inspired train
Who do not of thy indolence complain.
Ingrate, or indolent; or why thus long
Should Addison require his Funeral Song?
When a lov'd Monarch quits his cares below,
The meanest subjects join the common woe:
But from the favourite who his worth best knew
A tribute of superior grief is due.

* A Tragedy, by Nat. Lee.

† A Farce, by Benjamin Griffin, performed in 1717, at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, with some success. BIOG. DRAM.

‡ On the death of Mr Addison; June 17, 1719.

Shall

Shall Ramsey, and Melissa, lays produce,
That a mechanick's, this a woman's Muse,
While *thou*, Wit's sole surviving hope! supine,
—The melancholy theme dost still decline?
—Exert that fire which glows within your breast,
Nor longer thus in lazy silence rest:
Aloft your skilful Muse can wing her flight,
And emulate his strains whose praise you write.
For me, the meanest of the tuneful train,
T' attempt th' unequal task, were fond and vain;
But, could I sing, O sacred Shade! thy praise
Alone should claim, alone inspire my lays.
Thou kind Preceptor of the tender fair!
Great was the charge, and generous the care.
You shew'd us Virtue, so celestial bright,
So amiable, in so divine a light;
Asham'd at last, false glories we resign'd,
By thee instructed to improve the mind.
How oft, reclin'd beneath a sylvan shade,
Have I thy Marcia read, thy matchless maid!
In her, superior worth and virtue shine,
Her wisdom, manners, her whole self divine.
A great exalted mind in her appears;
And gentle Lucia melts my soul to tears.
Here, O ye fair! in this bright mirrour learn,
Your minds with never-fading charms t' adorn!
On these accomplishments bestow some care,
'Tis no great merit to be only fair.
His Rosamonda shall for ever prove
A mark to keep us safe from guilty love.
Beauty 's a snare, unless with virtue join'd,
An angel-form should have an angel-mind.

But

But when the Bard displays the artful scene,
The suppliant Beauty, and the furious Queen,
In melting notes sings her disastrous love,
With tears we pity, what we can't approve.
How learn'd he was, O Steele, do thou declare,
For that's a task beyond a Woman's sphere.
Some works I've seen, wrought up by rules of art,
Where poor excluded Nature had no part;
But he the Stagirite's strict axioms knew,
Yet still to nature, as to art, was true.
He touch'd the heart, the passions could command,
'Twas Nature all, but mended by his hand.
His style is noble, sentiments refin'd,
Full of benevolence to all mankind.
In more than theory he Religion knew,
And kept the heav'nly goddess still in view;
Rapt on her wings, his soul extatic soars,
Leaves our dull orb, a better world explores,
And now he 'as reach'd th' etherial plains above,
Th' eternal seat of harmony and love;
Blest harmony and love a-new inspire,
With hymns, like theirs, he joins th' angelic quire.
He's gone! oh, never, never to return!
Around his tomb, ye sacred Muses, mourn:
Your pious tears on the cold marble shed,
You lov'd him living, now lament him dead!
Cold is that breast, where glow'd your hallow'd fire;
Silent that voice whose notes you did inspire;
Still lies that hand th' harmonious lyre best strung;
Unmov'd the gen'rous heart, and mute the tuneful tongue!
That dome, where his remains now lie confin'd,
Holds not the clay that held a nobler mind.

Here

Here peaceful rest, to wait Heaven's great decree;
Soft be thy slumbers, sweet thy waking be!
Who can his Warwick's anxious woes express,
The bitter anguish, and the deep distress?
The lovely mourner does not grieve alone,
And distant Cambria echoes to each groan;
Her native country lends this poor relief,
We weep, we sigh, with sympathetic grief,
Ev'n I, oppress'd with sorrows of my own,
Suspend them all, to mourn her Addison.
O will she deign t' accept these lowly lays
My humble Muse thus offers to his praise!
O, may the lovely child, the budding fair,
Sooth all her griefs, and sweeten ev'ry care!
Still grow in virtue, as she grows in years,
Till she in full-blown excellence appears;
May she be perfect, as his fancy wrought,
The Poet's race excel the Poet's thought!
Let charms united blooming Marcia grace,
Her sire's exalted wit, her mother's beauteous face.

439. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE *.

EDINBURGH,

MY DEAR CHILD, SEPT. 17, 1720.

I KEEP your letters safely tied together, in order to observe your improvement, which I take notice of with great pleasure. Mrs. Mary's mark is no

* "At Mrs. Nazereau's at Chelsea."

less

less a satisfaction to me, because it denotes that she is well, and shews her endeavours to converse with me. But I hope you will now begin to make her sign the first letters of her name. Be pleased to write every other letter in English. To make this easy, I will be contented that what is written in your mother tongue one post, may be in French the next.

Be very dutiful and obedient to Mrs. Keck *; and believe me to be the most affectionate of fathers.

RICH. STEELE.

Remember me to Molly.

440.

STEELE'S JOURNEY TO EDINBURGH †.

JULY 1720. Put into Mr. Wolfe's hands, for Self and Dawson at table on the road, *6l. 6s.*

* The widow of one of Sir Richard's warmest friends; whose death was thus announced: "Friday last, the corpse of Mr. Keck, attorney at law, and son to the great money scrivener in Fleet-street, was brought to town from France, and will be interred next Friday in the Temple Church." *Thursday's Journal, Nov.* 12, 1719.—"A Poem on the Death of Robert Keck, Esq. of the Inner Temple, who died at Paris, Sept. 16, 1719, by a Friend who accompanied him to Dover in his way to France, and returned thither to meet his corpse when brought over to be buried in the Temple Church in London," was published in 1720.

† Among other Memoranda of Steele, in the year 1720, are regular entries of the persons to whom he sent Permits for his Fish-pool; and of his own expences: Thus, "July 20, To Mr. Cooper a Permit for the Fish-pool. To Mrs. Keck a Permit.

Aug.

Aug. 1. Arrived at Edinburgh. Writ to Mrs. Keck, enclosed to Mr. Plaxton *: Mr. A. Scurlock, Mr. Fuller, Mr. Knight, Mr. Fielding, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Welsted.

Aug. 3. Ned left me at the Office; and never returned with an account of the horses, or to bring me a chair. Abate of his four pounds a-year above his wages 5*s*.—Paid Mr. Scot my landlord 10*l*. sterling upon account of rent.

Aug. 4. Paid Simes, coachman, in full, for coming to Edinburgh, all demands, 18*l*.

Aug. 12. Agreed with Mr. Wright to teach Ned writing and arithmetick, at 5*s*. a month. Paid first month down.

Aug. 12. Agreed for Chairmen at 1*l*. 1*s*. *per* week, with Smith. A crown paid down.

Aug. 27. Writ to Mr. Plaxton, desiring he would buy my Son a trunk for keeping my letters, &c.

Sept. 4. Writ to Mr. Plaxton concerning my Son. Mrs. Splane taking measure of the rooms for hangings to be sent from Edinburgh. For Songs to Mr. Wilks, Mr. Cibber, about Permits and my Play.

Sept. 6. Writ to Mr. Plaxton, for inventory of my goods at London and Brook Green.

Sept. 23. Confined Dawson to his chamber, and kept him to his writing, &c. Two or three days after, he broke that confinement; and I gave him over.

Paid Mr. Slane, for the use of Brook Green-house, 20*l*.—July 21, sent to Bp. of Bangor 3 Permits; to Mrs. Heron 1; to Mr. Edmunds for Mr. Young 1.—Gave Dawson a guinea for his pocket upon account. Rice 1*l*. 1*s*. Ned 1*l*. 1*s*."

* His confidential Agent; see p. 575.

Edinburgh,

Edinburgh, Oct. 4. Sent Mr. Plaxton this account, formed upon papers sent to me from Paterson's:

STEELE				Cr.		
				£.	s.	d.
From Midsummer 1719 to Michaelmas 1720, at 1000*l. per annum*				1250	0	0
Coming to Scotland, of my own charge				50	0	0
				1300	0	0
	£.	s.	d.			
By money to Paterson	111	10	0			
By 5 quarters to Tonson	500	0	0			
By money to come to Scotland	50	0	0			
By forfeiture from absence	500	0	0			
				1161	10	0
				£. 138	10	0

441. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

EDINBURGH,

MY DEAR CHILD, OCT. 7, 1720.

I HAVE yours of the 30th of last month; and, from your diligence and improvement, conceive hopes of your being as excellent a person as your mother; you have great opportunities of becoming such a one, by observing the maxims and sentiments of her bosom friend, Mrs. Keck, who has condescended to take upon her the care of you and your

your sister, for which you are always to pay her the same respect as if she were your mother.

I have observed that your sister has, for the first time, written the *initial* or first letters of her name. Tell her I am highly delighted to see her subscription in such fair letters, and how many fine things those two letters stand for when she writes them. *M. S.* is *milk* and *sugar*, *mirth* and *safety*, *musick* and *songs*, *meat* and *sauce*, as well as *Molly* and *Spot*, and *Mary* and *Steele*.

You see I take pleasure in conversing with you, by prattling any thing to divert you. I hope we shall next month have an happy meeting, when I will entertain you with something that may be as good for the father as the children, and consequently please us.

I am, Madam,

Your affectionate father,

and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

442. TO MR. BROOKESBY*.

SIR, DEC. 1, 1720.

I THANK you for your intended favour of communicating to me discoveries in *Alchemy*; but I

* Directed, "At his house, the first door on the right hand in the Little Almonry, by the Dutch Envoy's, near Dean's yard."

have

have long resolved never to concern myself in enquiries of that sort *. I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

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443. Fre Xoly ot a Peffeh déhif zy Gihò Hixrahw Gefeepe †.

FO NH. SIPNOHE,
af rig Rouge af Lolpah meah fre Xruhxr.

GIHO, WEX. 10, 1720.

IE rave sheaf heagom ot xonélpaimf asaimgf Nh. Wape toh rig xomwuxéf im hepafiom fo fre Tigrloope. Fre day im drixer re rag axfew amèw mod

* In those enquiries, it will be recollected, Sir Richard had in earlier life been an unsuccessful dabbler.

† This letter is printed literally from Steele's hand-writing; but, to save the Reader trouble, a key to it is here annexed:

"The Copy of a Letter writ by Sir Richard Steele,
"To Mr. Gilmore, at his house at Poplar, near the Church.
"SIR, *Dec.* 10, 1720.

I HAVE great reason of complaint against Mr. Dale, for his conduct in relation to the Fish-pool. The way in which he has acted, and now proceeds, can lead to nothing but ruin of that invention, and dishonour to you and myself, who brought it into the world. I will, with the blessings of God, take the most just and effectual methods to obtain satisfaction to all innocent persons concerned for the affair; beginning with you, and ending with myself. In the mean time I must conjure and charge you at your peril, not to finish the tender, or let him into the secret of the structure thereof, without notice and consent of, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant, RICHARD STEELE."

léhoxeewg

léhoxeewg xam peaw fo mofrims zuf guime ot fraf imvemfiom, amew wigromouh fo voy' amew nygept dro zéhousrf if imfo fre dohépw. Ie dipp, difr fre zepeggins ot Sow, fake fre nogf jugf amèw ettexfuap nefrowg fo ozfaim gafigtaxfiom fo app immoxemf lehgomg xomxehmèw toh fre attaih zesimmims difrò voy amèw emwims difrò nygept. Im fre neam fine Ie nugf xomjuhe amèw xérahse voy' af voy'h lehipp mof fo timigh fre femweh oh pef rin imfo fre gexhef ot fre géféhuxfuhe freheot difrouf motixe amèw xomgemf ot, Giho,

voy' nogf oxewiemf runzpe gehvamf,

HIXRAHEW GFEEPE.

444. MEMORANDA.

PARTLY BY SIR RICHARD STEELE, AND PARTLY BY MR. PLAXTON.

"NOV. 29, 1720. My dear patron Sir Richard Steele writ to Mr. Alexander Scurlock at Caermarthen, to remit him 50*l.* part of 100*l.* charged in his account to Sir Richard as accepted to be paid to his uncle Phillips; but was paid by Sir Richard himself; and therefore, the said 100*l.* being entirely in Mr. Scurlock's hands, is the foundation on which he desired that remittance."

Dec. 15. Acknowledged the receipt of a bill of 30*l.* (drawn by Mr. Phillips on Mr. Horne) from Mr. Alexander Scurlock.

Dec.

Dec. 26. A letter to Mr. Gilmore, mentioning an advertisement in the Daily Post, at the Crown in Arundel-street, that Sir Richard Steele was there, and desires to see Mr. Gilmore, in order to communicate his thoughts upon the whole before the meeting which is to be at his house on the 3d of January next.—That he will not go out without leaving word; and desires Mr. Gilmore to send word what day he will come, by the bearer.

To remember the Duke of Newcastle's affair.—The Attorney General's report.—The affair of the Fish-pool.—The goods expected from Scotland *.—To put an advertisement into the Daily Post.—To abstain from Mr. ——'s company.—To Mr. Plaxton appears due, besides salary, 14*s.* 0½*d.*

Dec. 29. A letter from Edward Rice of Newton, signifying that Sir Thomas Stepney would not stand next election of Parliament; but that he, Mr. Rice, would; and desiring Sir Richard Steele's vote and interest. Immediately answered, and promised with great respect to that house.

Mem. To pass some time with Mr. Pembroke and Plaxton on the history of the Funds, with prospect towards my scheme at Survivorship, &c. to Life Rents on the present Funds. Consult Pembroke with a fee on all my present questions.

* Copy of a Bill of Lading sent up by Mr. Berry:

"*Leith*, Nov. 2, 1720. Received on board the Robert, James Thomson master, for London, four half barrels, two trunks, with a pair of musketoons and a pack of tobacco lashed to the trunks, and one box, directed to Sir Richard Steele in York buildings, *per* DAVID ALLAN.

The original delivered to Mr. Scott, the 22d of Dec. 1720."

Mrs.

Mrs. Sullivan desires Lord Halifax to admit Robert Sullivan to raise his house even with the rest of the neighbours.

Mr. Dues in the Mint prosecutes and takes writs against Mr. Williams; and *demands convene* before a Judge, to shew why he insists on bail.

Jan 13. Sir Richard Steele writ to Mr. Pringle, desiring him to pay to Mr. Tonson or order 150*l.*; and transmit the remainder of a quarter's salary, after proper deductions, to him Sir Richard Steele.

Feb. 11. Sent down to Marmaduke Williams an order to send Sir Richard Steele a bill of forty pounds upon Horne, to be drawn by Mr. John Philips at Carmarthen.

To go to Mr. Jodrell's *; and leave a note for Mr. Emlin, to get a new copy of the brief of the engrossing Bill on the South Sea against to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

To leave a message for Mr. Welsted †, to come to Sir Richard's, or be at Douglas's till sent for.

To buy Harris's Trigonometry.

445. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

DEAR CHILD, MARCH 29, 1721.

I HAVE received yours, and beg your pardon that I did not, as I designed, visit you with your brother; but he was so dirty that I was ashamed to bring him to your school.

* Clerk of the House of Commons.

† Leonard Welsted; of whom I have given some ample Memoirs in an Introduction to his "Miscellaneous Works."

I beseech you to continue in the good and diligent way you are in; and you will be an unspeakable delight and satisfaction to, Madam,

Your most affectionate father,
and most obedient humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

446. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

DEAR SISTER,

THAT I may be as good as my word, that is, to send each of you a pound of tea apiece; one is bohea, the other is green, so that you may please yourselves; but I trust to your generosity what you will bestow on a poor common school-boy; and, as you are ladies of good learning, and of good understanding and ingenuity, I can but humble myself in the highest degree to serve you. My cousin Scurlock gives his tenderest love and affection to you, and joins in respect to Mrs. Keck, with, Madam, your most loving brother, and humble servant to command, EUGENE STEELE *.

* Eugene Steele was some years under the care of Mr. Solomon Lowe, of Blithe-house, Hammersmith, who gave him the character of a sprightly lad, of fine parts. He was afterwards a hopeful scholar at that noble foundation where his father was educated, the Charter-house. Not long after he was taken home to Sir Richard's house in York-buildings, being indulged (as his genius lay that way) in acting plays in the great room there, called the *Censorium*; his constitution is said to have been hurt by frequent colds. He appears also to have been grievously tormented with the stone, and was cut for that terrible disorder by the famous Cheselden. See p. 591.

447. STEELE'S DIARY; AND HIS LETTER TO MR. PELHAM.

APRIL 4, 1721. I have lately had a fit of sickness, which has awakened in me, among other things, a sense of the little care I have taken of my own family. And as it is natural for men to be more affected with the actions and sufferings and observations upon the rest of the world, set down by their predecessors, than by what they receive from other men; I have taken a resolution to write down in this book, as in times of leisure I may have opportunity, things past, or things that may occur hereafter, for the perusal and consideration of my son Eugene Steele, and his sisters Elizabeth Steele and Mary Steele, my beloved children.

Easter Sunday, April 9, 1721.—After the repeated perusal of Dr. Tillotson's seventh Sermon, in the third volume of the small edition of his admirable and comfortable writings, and after having done certain acts of benevolence and charity to some needy persons of merit, I went this day to the Holy Sacrament. In addition to the proper prayers of the Church, I framed for my private use on this occasion the following Prayer:

"O Almighty Lord God, I prostrate myself before thy Divine Majesty, in hopes of mercy for all my former transgressions, through the merits of thy Son Jesus Christ.

Thou art my Maker; and knowest my infirmities, appetites, and passions, and the miserable habit of mind, which I have contracted through a guilty in-

dulgence of them. Pardon me, O Lord, in that I permitted them to grow upon me; and allow the moments for retrospect and repentance; or afford me thy mercy, if thou shalt please to take me away in the course of a faithful endeavour. I bow down to thee with a firm resolution to resist all perverse and sensual inclinations for the future. I beg thy grace and assistance, for the sake of our Lord Jesus, who has instituted this means of salvation, to which I approach with faith. Lord, O Lord, receive a broken and contrite heart. Amen."

April 9, 1721.—I have this morning resolved to pursue very warmly my being restored to my government of the Theatre Royal, which is my right, under the title of the Governor of the Royal Company of Comedians, and from which I have been violently dispossessed by the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty's Household, upon a frivolous pretence of jurisdiction in his office, which he has been persuaded to assert against the force of the King's Patent to me. This violation of property I take to have been instigated by the late Secretaries Stanhope and Craggs, for my opposition to the Peerage Bill, by speeches in the House and printed pamphlets.

The Duke of Newcastle brought me into this present Parliament for the town of Burrough-bridge; upon which consideration, I attempt all manner of fair methods to bring his Grace to reason, without a public trial in a Court of Justice; and therefore, after applying to my Lord Sunderland and Mr. Walpole for their good offices, I writ the following letter

letter to his Grace's brother, Mr. Henry Pelham, lately appointed one of the Lords of the Treasury.

"Sir, I presume to address myself to you, for your favour and patronage with your brother, the Duke of Newcastle. The matter is too public, and necessarily made so even in print, by a command to me from his Grace to apply to him neither by friends, speech, or letter, and consequently leaving me no other way to represent my condition. It is my misfortune to do exactly as the question lies before me in a certain House *, where I am glad to see you are growing eminent.

By this means good-will towards me is tossed from one interest into another, as the point which I vote for is respectively acceptable or ungrateful. At present I am wholly friendless, for no one is obliged to one who will do nothing but what he thinks just, because his suffrage never attends persons or parties. However, Sir, your quality and time of life make me hope you have the disinterested magnanimity to espouse an unhappy man, to the dissuasion even of your Brother from prolonging a mortification, which unhappy incidents (without any particular provocation from me, or personal resentment in his Grace) brought upon me, to the suffering for a long series of time all the evils and sorrows that this life can afford.

I am, Sir, your most obedient,
and most humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

To the Right Hon. Henry Pelham, esq.
one of the Lords of the Treasury, &c.
April 5, 1721."

* House of Commons.

April

April 29, 1721. I purchased this day fifteen assignments in the Fishpool undertaking, with a promissory note to deliver to Mr. Robert Wilks (who sold them to me) a bond of five hundred pounds upon demand*; the said bond to be payable within two years after this date.

448. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER, APRIL 5, 1721.

I THANK you for your kindness, which makes you attempt to draw your father's picture; but I hope, and am confident, you are still better employed in imitating the life of your excellent mother. Her friend † is the best example and help you can have in pursuing that amiable and worthy pattern.

I am this morning much better; and purpose, God willing, to go and bring home your brother; but I shall not adventure to introduce him to such fine ladies as his sisters are till he has got his new cloaths.

I am, dear child,

Most affectionately yours,

RICH. STEELE.

My thanks and service to *M. S.*

* "June 6, 1721. I purpose to carry the abovementioned Bond to Mr. Wilks this morning. R. S."

† Mrs. Keck.

449. TO

449. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

MY DEAR CHILD, APRIL 5, 1721.

I HAVE received your letter by the penny-post, and read it with great pleasure and comfort, though I was then a little discomposed.

I have to-day had a tooth drawn, and am disordered also with a cold; but, as soon as I go out, I will not fail to visit Mrs. Keck, and my dear little ones.

Service to *Miss* Molly; but tell her I am sorry she has forgot the charms I find in *M. S.*

Your affectionate father, RICH. STEELE.

450. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

MY DEAR BETTY, APRIL 12, 1721.

WRITE this carefully over again, with the amendment of a large letter beginning every line, as likewise the stops as pointed to you; and send both this, and what you write again, to,

Madam,

Your most affectionate father,
and most humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

451. TO

451. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

MY DEAR CHILD, APRIL 14, 1721.

I HAVE received yours of this day, with the corrected copy, in which there are still some faults, and which I will shew you when I see you. In the mean time, as I take pleasure in instructing you from the diligence I see in you, I remark to you, that you are apt to add flourishes to your writing. To this you must by no means accustom yourself; but remember that plainness and simplicity are the chief beauties in all works and performances whatsoever. Be pleased to forbear adding at the end of a verse a line as thus ——. You have done so to every line of this last copy. In the main, you have done it very well, and to the satisfaction of,

Madam,

Your most affectionate father,
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

452. TO ——.

DEAR PLAIN MAN, JULY 15, 1721.

WHEN your wife comes to you, I propose, God willing, to send with her my poor sister; but am unwilling to do that till you have signified to me your willingness to receive her at the rate I design; which

which is, thirty pounds a-year for my sister Mrs. Katherine Steele *, and ten pounds a-year for Mrs. Sarah Griffith, her servant and companion.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

453. TO MR. ALEX. SCURLOCK.

COUSIN SANDY, AUG. 13, 1721.

I HAD a letter from you last post, without date of the month, and bearing only the year. Your four twenty pounds are well paid to me, and entered in my day-book.

I observe you cannot undersand that you may with safety comply with my request, of sending me your note or money for what is already due. That matter is so plain, that I know it cannot be for want of apprehension that you do not come into it. All I shall say on that subject is, that people do not their duty in life, who will not readily execute any thing consistent with their own interest and safety, that is conducive to the ease and prosperity of their friends.

Your humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

* This lady was insane some time before she died.

454. TO

454. TO MR. ALEX. SCURLOCK.

COUSIN SANDY, AUG. 29, 1721.

THIS is to acquaint you that I am applied to by eminent persons, who deal in mines, in order to work that near Llangunnor. I desire you would ask Mr. Morgan Davies whether the persons who had a lease of it, to wit, Caresbrook, Batchelor, and Harry Owen, were not ejected regularly, and by formal course of law; if not, I am to consider and advise, whether, for default of working or other failure, their pretensions are not extinct. I shall be very cautious in this matter, and go no hazard myself, or entail any on my successors, on this head, but be as circumspect as possible. Please to give me the best intelligence you can get in the history of this transaction, in which you will oblige,

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

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455. STEELE'S DIARY *continued.*

SUNDAY, SEPT. 17, 1721.

I AM going this morning to the Lord Bishop of Bangor *, now nominated Bishop of Hereford, with a design to leave with his Lordship my last will, whereby he is my executor and guardian to my Son;

* Dr. Benjamin Hoadly.

and

and (humbly resigning myself to Providence, whether I shall live to do any thing I design) I purpose to leave all my papers in as good order as I can for his perusal, before I go to Scotland.

456. TO MR. WILKS.

SIR, DEC. 7, 1721.

I HAVE great acknowledgments to make to you for putting me in the head at first of being concerned at the Playhouse, and I have ever endeavoured to shew you very particular instances of my esteem and affection during the time we have been together.

I am sorry that the gift of fourteen hundred pounds, for what was mine before, could not prevail so much as to let what I had stand as a deposit, for a contingent, in case an impudent cheat is not determined to be such in Wilbraham, who detains my writings contrary to the order of Minshull, to which he is obliged under his hand to deliver them.

But the business of this Letter is in particular to speak to you, not to persist in so unreasonable a thing as the denial of payment of the sum which remains above what there is any claim or pretence against my receiving.

It is hardly in your power to make me other than, Sir,

Your most affectionate friend,
and most humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

457. TO

457. TO MR. CIBBER.

SIR, YORK-BUILDINGS, DEC. 7, 1721.

WHEN you came to me with the modest request of desiring I would re-purchase my share in scenes and the stock; I did not doubt but you had sentiments of great kindness towards me in general; and that all the Chapter, as I have taken the liberty to call us in conjunction, had as much terror of doing as receiving an hardship. But, if it could have entered into my thoughts, that it was possible men would fail of placing the same value (as a security against a contingent demand) which I gave for it, your answer had not been at all like what it was.

You have been the chief engine in ensnaring me into a concession which I should have been ashamed to own, before you had the resolution to deny so equitable a demand as I made to you. But, as it now is, besides the folly of giving to men richer than myself, I have done it to those that have no regard for me, but as a tool and a screen against others, who want to treat you ill, and forbear only because of my relation to you; which shall not be very long, for it is in my power to get rid of my enemies much more easily than I can have common justice of my friends. This is evident in the monstrous hardiness of denying the Governor of your House, as you shall find I am, the superfluity of his income, which is liable to no demand or pretence but that of, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

458. TO

458. TO MR. BOOTH.

SIR, DEC. 7, 1721.

IT has not happened to me to be so conversant with you as I have been with Mr. Wilks and Mr. Cibber, and therefore could not expect that concern and tenderness for me as I hoped from them. But, as you are affected by my late concession of a large sum of money greatly to your advantage, I hoped the justice of letting that value secure me against pretences to it elsewhere. But, since you have not thought that reasonable, and have taken counsel whether a partner who has paid the mortgage off of his part of the effects, and given the partners in pure benevolence a thousand pounds as a title to their taking his share of the estate, security against the mortgage-deeds unjustly detained from him—I say, since this is the disposition you are in towards me, I expect you, for your own sakes as well as mine, not to detain the fifth of the fourth heretofore demanded, and to which there is no claim.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient,
and most humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

459. An

459. An Account of the Nett PROFITS of the THEATRE in the Year 1721.

Month and Day.		Total profit.	The fourth part.	The fourth of the fifth.
September	23	126 0 0	31 10 0	6 6 0
October	7	112 0 0	28 0 0	5 12 0
	21	145 0 0	36 5 0	7 5 0
	28	108 0 0	27 0 0	5 8 0
November	4	152 0 0	38 0 0	7 12 0
	11	132 0 0	33 0 0	6 12 0
	18	156 0 0	39 0 0	7 16 0
	25	200 0 0	50 0 0	10 0 0
December	2	216 0 0	54 0 0	10 16 0
		1347 0 0	336 15 0	67 7 0

460. TO MR. CASTELMAN.

MR. CASTELMAN, FEB. 9, 1721-2.

BE pleased to send me a catalogue of our stock of Plays by the bearer, Mr. Plaxton, as soon as you can.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

461. TO

461. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE, AND MOLLY STEELE.

MY DEAR GIRLS, FEB. 11, 1721-2.

YOUR brother is just now at ease, after great torment of the gravel or stone *. I love you all so tenderly, that my tears are ready to flow, when I tell you that I am,

Dearest creatures,
Your most affectionate father,
and most humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

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462. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

MY DEAR CHILD, MARCH 31, 1722.

I BEG your pardon that I made Mrs. Keck's servant stay so long; it was occasioned by a crowd of people importunate to speak with me on my coming to town †. I send you such tickets ‡ as I can by our present rules; and am, with joy in your hopeful behaviour and toward spirit, Madam,

Your most affectionate father,
and most humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

Give my most humble service to your good and honoured guardian.

* See p. 578.

† He was just then elected into parliament for Wendover.

‡ Either for the Theatre at Drury-lane, or for some concert in York-buildings. In the latter business Steele was principally concerned, by which he did not better his circumstances.

463. TO

463. TO MR. GILMORE.

SIR, MAY 24, 1722.

I HAVE yours of to-day, consisting of a declaration, that you shall be forced to do what you otherwise would not, by reason of my paying you fifteen pounds instead of thirty pounds; and that thirty pounds, you say, will still leave me in your debt eighty pounds by balance, ending in April. I should seem insensible, and not to know the nature of my own actions, if I should not on this occasion acquaint you that I am become your creditor, from a great opinion of your talents, and making an expence in support of them at all hazards; and that all the adversity which befell the Fishpool, happened from your having been persuaded to throw yourself into the hands of Mr. Dale, by the minister of your parish, who introduced you to me.

If you calmly consider, you will very well know that you have never had any disappointments from me, but what have been abatements of what I was inclined to do for you, out of free-will and respect to you, with very hazardous hopes of gain to myself; and those abatements occasioned by unforeseen distress in my health and fortune, on which occasions you have always sent me a declaration of your being ready to join with any body else in mortification of me.

I have said all this as it is extorted from me by your reproaches; but I have at the same time, in spite of all particularity towards me, a great sense

of

of your merit, and an ambition of producing it for the good of the world as well as ourselves. If your labours come to nothing, I am, by a condition imposed on me by myself, a considerable loser; and if they turn to advantage, I am sure I have proportionate pretence to gain.

I thank God, I am from great torment restored to present ease; and hope the next dressing will give authority to my physician to allow me the use of my legs: and nothing shall be wanting, within the rules of honour, justice, and discretion, to promote the present Project *.

I am, Sir, &c. RICH. STEELE.

464. TO MR. ALEXANDER SCURLOCK.

YORK-BUILDINGS, MAY 26, 1722.

DEAR COUSIN AND COUNSELLOR,

AFTER I have condoled with you upon the death of poor Jonathan, I must acknowledge the receipt of yours, with thirty pounds drawn on Mr. Horn by Mr. Philips, which, with thirty pounds sent me before, and the forty which Marmaduke Williams sent in your absence, complete an hundred pounds which I desired of you.

Had you sent it me at once, it had been better to me than two hundred pounds: but I must submit to the inconveniencies which a certain easiness and irregularity in my own affairs subject me to.

* "The Fish-pool went into Brunsden's dock, Nov. 1, 1722. R. S."

Thus I only complain of myself; and hope, by the blessing of Almighty God, to put my affairs and keep them so much within my income, as not to put my friends in any future pain or trouble for me.

I am, Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

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465. STATEMENT OF PLAYHOUSE ACCOMPTS.

1721-2.

SIR RICHARD STEELE Cr.

	£.	s.	d.
To the several balances from the 9th Sept. to the 15th Feb. —	690	15	0
May 31, another balance —	10	3	2
£.	700	18	2

PER CONTRA, Dr.

Paid Sir Richard the 20th part at several times — —	138	3	0
Jan. 29, lent by note — —	100	0	0
Feb. 28, lent by ditto — —	100	0	0
April 2, lent ditto by Mr. Wilks	100	0	0
Paid Mr. Rich in full of all demands for cloaths and scenes, left in Drury-lane Theatre, 196*l.* 12*s.* 0*d.* Sir Richard's fourth part — —	49	3	0
In cash — —	213	12	2
£.	700	18	2

466. A CERTIFICATE, DRAWN BY SIR RICHARD STEELE.

NOV. 17, 1722.

FRANCIS CARTERET served under Colonel Lane at Worcester fight, from which he escaped with great danger and difficulty; afterwards under the Duke of Monmouth, at the raising of the siege of Mons, as lieutenant and quarter-master. Being reduced, he worked many years as a dyer, and had his house burnt three several times; in the second of which fires, he lost in the flames his wife, two children, two men servants, and a maid; all his goods, and the goods of several customers, to a great value. Being utterly ruined, he was forced to enlist in the Guards, where he served about twenty years. He is now in the 86th year of his age; having an aged wife, both sick and lame; and is in a most distressed and miserable condition.

I know the said Carteret; and believe the above contents to be true. RICH. STEELE.

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467. FROM MR. J. R.

SIR, 1722.

WESTMINSTER-ABBEY, next after the place that holds the Crowned-heads, and their chief favourites and ministers, has dedicated the largest and most embellished piece of its holy ground to men of great genius; and the most pompous monu-

ments there, if we only except those that contain the remains of Majesty itself, are sacred to the ashes of the Poets *. But of all monuments, those are the most lasting that appear in books. Writings will last, when marble and brazen tombs are mouldered away, and decayed. It is for this reason, care has been taken to engrave the monuments, and collect the characters and epitaphs of all the great men, that nothing may be wanting for the preservation of their memories to latest posterity.

The address of the following papers is certainly due to one of the greatest men of genius whom Heaven still preserves from those silent mansions, that he may be profitable to the whole world, and continue to do daily honour to his species. All English mankind have received so much pleasure and profit from your ingenious and instructive writings, that, by the votes of the living, the address would be entirely due to Sir RICHARD STEELE: and if we could raise the ashes of the mighty dead who lie there, we should have their suffrages too on the same side.

The greatest Princes, the best and learnedest Divines, and the most ingenious Poets, that Britain can boast of, would undoubtedly, if we could recall them to the fresh enjoyment of a moment's life, seal in that very moment such their last will in your favour.

You would certainly deserve, in the first place, the votes of all the magnanimous heroic Princes of Britain on your side. The noble and generous

* STEELE has not yet a monumental stone in that Temple of Worthies; nor had ADDISON till the present year.

foundation

foundation on which that immortal, though little piece, intituled *The Christian Hero,* is formed throughout, is a glory to our Country that it was written by an Englishman. It deserves to be translated into a language which is universal, that all Nations might learn from thence what great excellencies we Englishmen, who have had so many heroic Princes, require in a Prince, before we allow him the title of a Hero.

Again, when we behold you writing in a spiritual way, and recommending divine things to the consideration of men, how are we moved with piety, and exalted into devotion, with having such patterns set before us in so lively a manner as that in which you have, more than once, represented those heavenly expressions, and those angelical characters of a Tillotson, a Smalridge, and a South!

As to the Poets, I shall mention but one (though every one of your contemporaries, and most of those who lived before, have been recommended in your writings); and that is, the late most ingenious Mr. ADDISON. That accomplished gentleman, and universal scholar, was too good a judge of your merits, to have his choice doubted in this case; and too near a friend, to have his vast value for you mentioned farther to you, with any decency, on this occasion.

Thus, Sir, the Poet, the Priest, and the King (the three greatest names under Heaven, as Mr. Cowley calls them) could they be raised from their graves, would approve the choice I have made in addressing these papers to you; and if you but pardon it, and approve the method of the book itself,

I must

I must say to you, what you yourself formerly said to another very great man, "your approbation is my fame."

I am, Sir, with the profoundest respect,
Your most obedient,
and most devoted humble servant,
J. R. *

468. TO MR. CONGREVE †.

SIR, [1722.]

THIS is the second time ‡ that I have, without your leave, taken the liberty to make a public address to you. However uneasy you may be *for your own sake* in receiving compliments of this nature, I depend upon your known humanity for pardon, when I acknowledge, that you have this present trouble for *mine*. When I take myself to be ill treated with regard to my behaviour to the merit of other men, my conduct towards you is an argument of my candour that way, as well as that your name and authority will be my protection in it. You will give me leave, therefore, in a matter that concerns us in the poetical world, to make you my judge, whether I am not injured in the highest

* This was prefixed to the third edition of "The Antiquities of St. Peter's, or the Abbey Church of Westminster, &c. 1722."

† Occasioned by Mr. Tickell's Preface to the four volumes of Mr. Addison's Works. See, in p. 390, Steele's Original Preface to "The Drummer."

‡ See the former Letter in p. 341.

manner;

manner; for, with men of your taste and delicacy, it is a high crime and misdemeanour to be guilty of any thing that is disingenuous: but I will go into the matter.

Upon my return out of Scotland, I visited Mr. Tonson's shop, and thanked him for his care in sending to my house the volumes of my dear and honoured friend Mr. Addison, which are at last published by his secretary Mr. Tickell; but took occasion to observe, "that I had not seen the work before it came out;" which he did not think fit to excuse any otherwise than by a recrimination, "that I had put into his hands at an high price, a comedy called, 'The Drummer;' which, by my zeal for it, he took to be written by Mr. Addison, of which, after his death, he said, I directly acknowledged he was the author."

To urge this hardship still more home, he produced a receipt under my hand, in these words:

"March 12, 1715.

"Received then the sum of fifty guineas, for the copy of the Comedy called 'The Drummer, or, The Haunted House:' I say, received by order of the Author of the said Comedy,

RICHARD STEELE."

And added, at the same time, that since Mr. Tickell had not thought fit to make that play a part of Mr. Addison's Works, he would sell the copy to any bookseller that would give most for it.

This is represented thus circumstantially to shew how incumbent it is upon me, as well in justice to the bookseller, as for many other considerations, to produce this Comedy a second time; and take this occasion

occasion to vindicate myself against certain insinuations thrown out by the publisher of Mr. Addison's writings concerning my behaviour in the nicest circumstance, that of doing justice to the merit of my friend.

I shall take the liberty, before I have ended this letter, to say why I believe "The Drummer" a performance of Mr. Addison; and, after declaring this, any surviving writer may be at ease, if there be any one who has hitherto been vain enough to hope, or silly enough to fear, it may be given to himself.

Before I go any further, I must make my public appeal to you and all the learned world; and humbly demand, whether it was a decent or reasonable thing that works written (as a great part of Mr. Addison's were) in correspondence with me, ought to have been published without my review of the catalogue of them? or, if there were any exception to be made against any circumstance in my conduct, whether an opportunity to explain myself should not have been allowed me, before any reflections were made upon me in print?

When I perused Mr. Tickell's Preface, I had soon many objections, besides his omission to say any thing of "The Drummer," against his long-expected performance; the chief intention of which, and which it concerns me first to examine, seems to aim at doing the deceased Author justice against me, whom he insinuates to have assumed to myself part of the merit of my Friend.

He is pleased, Sir, to express himself concerning the present Writer in the following manner: "The Comedy

Comedy called 'The Tender Husband' appeared much about the same time, to which Mr. Addison wrote the prologue. Sir Richard Steele surprised him with a very handsome dedication of this play, and has since acquainted the publick that he owed some of the most taking scenes of it to Mr. Addison *."

"He was in that kingdom [Ireland] when he first discovered Sir Richard Steele to be the author of 'The Tatler,' by an observation upon Virgil, which had been by him communicated to his friend †. The assistance he occasionally gave him afterwards, in the course of his paper, did not a little contribute to advance its reputation; and, upon the change of the Ministry, he found leisure to engage more constantly in that work; which, however, was dropped at last, as it had been taken up, without his participation.

"In the last paper, which closed those celebrated performances, and in the preface to the last volume, Sir Richard Steele has given to Mr. Addison the honour of the most applauded pieces in that collection. But, as that acknowledgment was delivered only in general terms, without directing the publick to the several papers, Mr. Addison, who was content with the praise arising from his own works, and too delicate to take any part of that which belonged to others, afterwards thought fit to distinguish his writings in the Spectators and Guardians by such marks as might remove the least possibility

* Mr. Tickell's Preface, p. 11.

† This has been generally supposed to allude to the Tatler, N° 6, April 23, 1709. See the edition of 1806, vol. I. p. 56.

of

of mistake in the most undiscerning readers. It was necessary that his share in the Tatlers should be adjusted in a complete collection of his Works; for which reason Sir Richard Steele, in compliance with the request of his deceased friend, delivered to him by the Editor, was pleased to mark with his own hand those Tatlers which are inserted in this edition, and even to point out several in the writing of which they were both concerned *."

"The plan of 'The Spectator,' as far as it regards the feigned person of the Author, and of the several characters that compose his Club, was projected in concert with Sir Richard Steele; and, because many passages in the course of the work would otherwise be obscure, I have taken leave to insert one single paper, written by Sir Richard Steele, wherein those characters are drawn, which may serve as a *Dramatis Personæ*, or as so many pictures for an ornament and explication of the whole. As for the distinct papers, they were never or seldom shewn to each other by their respective Authors; who fully answered the promise they had made, and far outwent the expectation they had raised, of pursuing their labour in the same spirit and strength with which it was begun †."

It need not be explained, that it is here intimated that I had not sufficiently acknowledged what was due to Mr. Addison in these writings. I shall make a full answer to what seems intended by the words "he was too delicate to take any part of that which belonged to others," if I can recite, out of my own

* Mr. Tickell's Preface, p. 12. † Ibid. p. 13.

papers,

papers, any thing that may make it appear groundless.

The subsequent encomiums bestowed by me on Mr. Addison will, I hope, be of service to me in this particular.

"But I have only one gentleman, *who will be nameless*, to thank for any frequent assistance to me; which, indeed, it would have been barbarous in him to have denied to one with whom he has lived in an intimacy from childhood, considering the great ease with which he is able to dispatch the most entertaining pieces of this nature. This good office he performed with such force of genius, humour, wit, and learning, that I fared like a distressed Prince who calls in a powerful neighbour to his aid. I was undone by my auxiliary. When I had once called him in, I could not subsist without dependence on him.

"The same hand writ the distinguishing characters of men and women, under the names of *Musical Instruments*, the *Distress of the News-writers*, the *Inventory of the Play-house*, and the *Description of the Thermometer*; which I cannot but look upon as the greatest embellishments of this work *."

"As to the work itself, the acceptance it has met with is the best proof of its value: but I should err against that candour which an honest man should always carry about him, if I did not own, that the most approved pieces in it were written by others, and those which have been most excepted against by myself. The hand that has assisted me in those

* Preface to the fourth volume of the Tatlers.

noble

noble discourses upon the immortality of the soul, the glorious prospects of another life, and the most sublime ideas of Religion and Virtue, is a person who is too fondly my friend ever to own them: but I should little deserve to be his, if I usurped the glory of them. I must acknowledge, at the same time, that I think the finest strokes of wit and humour in all Mr. Bickerstaff's Lucubrations are those for which he is also beholden to him *."

"I hope the apology I have made as to the licence allowable to a feigned character, may excuse any thing that has been said in these Discourses of the Spectator and his works. But the imputation of the grossest vanity would still dwell upon me, if I did not give some account by what means I was enabled to keep up the spirit of so long and approved a performance. All the papers marked with a *C, L, I,* or *O,* that is to say, all the papers *which I have distinguished* by any letter in the name of the Muse *CLIO* †, were given me by the gentleman of whose assistance I formerly boasted in the preface and concluding leaf of 'The Tatler.' I am indeed much more proud of his long-continued friendship, than I should be of the fame of being thought the Author of any writings which he himself is capable of producing. I remember, when I finished 'The Tender Husband,' I told him there

* Tatler, N° 271.

† It seems probable that these letters, which in conjunction make up the name of the Muse *Clio,* were originally used as signatures by Addison, to denote the places where the papers were written, viz. *Chelsea, London, Islington,* and his *Office* as Secretary of State.

was

was nothing I so ardently wished as that we might, some time or other, publish a work, written by us both, which should bear the name of 'The Monument,' in memory of our friendship. I heartily wish what I have done here were as honorary to that sacred name as learning, wit, and humanity, render those pieces which I have taught the Reader how to distinguish for his. When the Play above mentioned was last acted, there were so many applauded strokes in it, which I had from the same hand, that I thought very meanly of myself that I had ever publicly acknowledged them. After I have put other friends upon importuning him to publish dramatic as well as other writings he has by him, I shall end what I think I am obliged to say on this head by giving the reader this hint for the better judging of my productions: That the best comment upon them would be an account when the Patron to 'The Tender Husband' was in England or abroad *."

"My purpose, in this application, is only to shew the esteem I have for you; and that I look upon my intimacy with you as one of the most valuable enjoyments of my life †."

I am sure you have read my quotations with indignation against the little zeal which prompted the Editor; who, by the way, has in himself done nothing in applause of the works which he prefaces, to the mean endeavours of adding to Mr. Addison, by disparaging a man who had for the greatest part of his life been his known bosom friend, and

* Spectator, N° 555.

† Dedication before "The Tender Husband." See p. 88.

shielded

shielded him from all the resentments which many of his own works would have brought upon him at the time in which they were written. It is really a good office to society, to expose the indiscretion of intermeddlers in the friendship and correspondence of men, whose sentiments, passions, and resentments, are too great for their proportion of soul. Could the Editor's indiscretion provoke me even so far as within the rules of strictest honour I could go, and I were not restrained by supererogatory affection to dear Mr. Addison, I would ask this unskilful creature what he means, when he speaks in the air of a reproach, that "The Tatler was laid down as it was taken up, without his participation;" let him speak out and say, why "without his knowledge" would not serve his purpose as well. If, as he says, he restrains himself to Mr. Addison's character as a writer, while he attempts to lessen me, he exalts me: for he has declared to all the world what I never have so explicitly done, that I am, to all intents and purposes, the author of "The Tatler." He very justly says, the occasional assistance Mr. Addison gave me in the course of that Paper "did not a little contribute to advance its reputation, especially when, upon the change of the Ministry, he found leisure to engage more constantly in it." It was advanced indeed; for it was raised to a greater thing than I intended it: for the elegance, purity, and correctness, which appeared in his writings, were not so much my purpose, as in any intelligible manner as I could to railly all those singularities of human life, through the different professions and characters in it, which obstruct any thing

thing that was truly good and great. After this acknowledgement, you will see, that is, such a man as you will see, that I rejoiced in being excelled; and made those little talents, whatever they are which I have, give way, and be subservient to the superior qualities of a friend whom I loved, and whose modesty would never have admitted them to come into daylight but under such a shelter. So that all which the Editor has said, either out of design or incapacity, Mr. Congreve must determine to end in this, that Steele has been so candid and upright, that he owes nothing to Mr. Addison as a Writer; but whether he does or does not, whatever Steele owes to Mr. Addison, the publick owes Addison to Steele. But the Editor has such a fantastical and ignorant zeal for his Patron, that he will not allow his correspondents to conceal any thing of his, though in obedience to his commands. What I never did declare was Mr. Addison's, I had his direct injunctions to hide, against the natural warmth and passion of my own temper towards my friends. Many of the writings now published as his, I have been very patiently traduced and calumniated for, as they were pleasantries and oblique strokes upon certain the wittiest men of the age; who will now restore me to their good-will, in proportion to the abatement of wit which they thought I employed against them. But I was saying that the Editor will not allow us to obey his Patron's commands in any thing which he thinks would redound to his credit if discovered. And because I would shew a little wit in my anger, I shall have the discretion to shew you, that he has been guilty in this particular towards a much

much greater man than your humble servant, and one whom you are much more obliged to vindicate.

Mr. Dryden, in his Virgil, after having acknowledged, that "a certain excellent young man" had shewed him many faults in the translation of Virgil, which he had endeavoured to correct, goes on to say, "Two other worthy friends of mine, who desire to have their names concealed, seeing me straitened in my time, took pity on me, and gave me the Life of Virgil, the two Prefaces to the Pastorals and the Georgics, and all the Arguments in prose to the whole translation." If Mr. Addison is one of the two friends, and the Preface to the Georgics be what the Editor calls the Essay upon the Georgics, as one may adventure to say they are, from their being word for word the same, he has cast an inhuman reflection upon Mr. Dryden, who, though tied down not to name Mr. Addison, pointed at him, so as all mankind conversant in these matters knew him, with an elogium equal to the highest merit, considering who it was that bestowed it. I could not avoid remarking upon this circumstance, out of justice to Mr. Dryden; but confess, at the same time, I took a great pleasure in doing it, because I knew, in exposing this outrage, I made my court to Mr. Congreve.

I have observed, that the Editor will not let me nor any one else obey Mr. Addison's commands in hiding any thing he desires should be concealed. I cannot but take further notice, that the circumstance of marking his Spectators, which I did not know till I had done with the work, I made my own act; because I thought it too great a sensibility in

in my friend, and thought it, since it was done, better to be supposed marked by me than the Author himself; the real state of which this zealot rashly and injudiciously exposes. I ask the reader, Whether any thing but an earnestness to disparage me could provoke the Editor, in behalf of Mr. Addison, to say that he marked it out of caution against me, when I had taken upon me to say it was I that did it out of tenderness to him?

As the imputation of any the least attempt of arrogating to myself, or detracting from Mr. Addison, is without any colour of truth; you will give me leave to go on in the same ardour towards him, and resent the cold, unaffectionate, dry, and barren manner, in which this gentleman gives an account of as great a Benefactor as any one learned man ever had of another. Would any man, who had been produced from a College life, and pushed into one of the most considerable employments of the kingdom as to its weight and trust, and greatly lucrative with respect to a Fellowship, and who had been daily and hourly with one of the greatest men of the age, be satisfied with himself in saying nothing of such a person, besides what all the world knew, except a particularity, and that to his disadvantage, which I, his friend from a boy, don't know to be true; to wit, "that he never had a regular pulse?" As for the facts and considerable periods of his life, he either knew nothing of them, or injudiciously places them in a worse light than that in which they really stood. When he speaks of Mr. Addison's declining to go into orders, his way of doing it is, to lament that his seriousness and modesty, which

might have recommended him, "proved the chief obstacles to it. It seems, those qualities by which the Priesthood is so much adorned represented the duties of it as too weighty for him, and rendered him still more worthy of that honour which they made him decline." These, you know very well, were not the reasons which made Mr. Addison turn his thoughts to the civil world; and, as you were the instrument of his becoming acquainted with my Lord Halifax, I doubt not but you remember the warm instances that noble Lord made to the Head of the College, not to insist upon Mr. Addison's going into orders. His arguments were founded upon the general pravity and corruption of men of business, who wanted liberal education. And I remember, as if I had read the letter yesterday, that my Lord ended with a compliment, "that, however he might be represented as no friend to the Church, he never would do it any other injury than keeping Mr. Addison out of it."—The contention for this man, in his early youth, among the people of greatest power, Mr. Secretary Tickell, the executor for his fame, is pleased to ascribe to a serious visage and modesty of behaviour. When a writer is grossly and essentially faulty, it were a jest to take notice of a false expression, or a phrase; otherwise Priesthood, in that place, might be observed upon, as a term not used by the real well-wishers to Clergymen, except when they would express some solemn act, and not when that order is spoken of as a profession among gentlemen. I will not, therefore, busy myself about "the unconcerning parts of knowledge; but be contented, like a reader of plain sense, without politeness;" and, since

since Mr. Secretary will give us no account of this gentleman, "I admit the Alps and Apennines, instead of his Editor, to be commentators of his works, which," as the Editor says, "have raised a demand for correctness." This demand, by the way, ought to be more strong upon those who were most about him, and had the greatest advantage of "his example." But our Editor says, "that those who come the nearest to exactness are but too often fond of unnatural beauties, and aim at something better than perfection." Believe me, Sir, Mr. Addison's example will carry no man further than that height for which Nature capacitated him; and the affectation of following great men in works above the genius of their imitators will never rise further than the production of uncommon and unsuitable ornaments in a barren discourse, like flowers upon an heath, such as the author's phrase of "something better than perfection." But indeed his preface, if ever any thing was, is that "something better;" for it is so extraordinary that we cannot say it is too long or too short, or deny but that it is both. I think I abstract myself from all manner of prejudice when I aver, that no man, though without any obligation to Mr. Addison, would have represented him in his family, and his friendships or his personal character, so disadvantageously as his Secretary (in preference of whom he incurred the warmest resentments of other gentlemen) has been pleased to describe him in those particulars.

Mr. Dean Addison, father of this memorable man, left behind him four children, each of whom, for excellent talents and singular perfections, was as

much above the ordinary world as their brother Joseph was above them. Were things of this nature to be exposed to public view, I could shew, under the Dean's own hand *, in the warmest terms, his blessing on the friendship between his son and me; nor had he a child who did not prefer me in the first place of kindness and esteem, as their father loved me like one of them: and I can with great pleasure say, I never omitted any opportunity of shewing that zeal for their persons and interests as became a gentleman and a friend. Were I now to indulge myself, I could talk a great deal to you, which I am sure would be entertaining; but as I am speaking, at the same time, to all the world, I considered it would be impertinent. Let me then confine myself a while to the following Play, which I at first recommended to the stage, and carried to the press. No one who reads the Preface which I published † with it will imagine I could be induced to say so much as I then did, had I not known the man I best loved had had a part in it, or had I believed that any other concerned had much more to do than as an *amanuensis*.

But, indeed, had I not known, at the time, of the transaction concerning the acting on the stage and sale of the copy, I should, I think, have seen Mr. Addison in every page of it; for he was above all men in that talent we call *humour*, and enjoyed it in such perfection that I have often reflected,

* If this letter should by chance exist among the papers of any curious Collector, it would be an acceptable communication to the publick.

† See this in p. 390.

after

after a night spent with him apart from all the world, that I had had the pleasure of conversing with an intimate acquaintance of Terence and Catullus, who had all their wit and nature, heightened with humour more exquisite and delightful than any other man ever possessed.

They who shall read this Play, after being let into the secret that it was written by Mr. Addison, *or under his direction*, will probably be attentive to those excellences which they before overlooked; and wonder they did not till now observe, that there is not an expression in the whole piece which has not in it the most nice propriety and aptitude to the character which utters it. Here is that smiling mirth, that delicate satire, and genteel raillery, which appeared in Mr. Addison when he was free among intimates: I say, when he was free from *his remarkable* bashfulness, which is a cloke that hides and muffles merit; and his abilities were covered only by modesty, which doubles the beauties which are seen, and gives credit and esteem to all that are concealed.

"The Drummer" made no great figure on the stage, though exquisitely well acted; but, when I observe this, I say a much harder thing of the stage than of the Comedy. When I say the stage in this place, I am [to be] understood to mean in general the present taste of theatrical representation, where nothing that is not violent, and, as I may say, grossly delightful, can come on without hazard of being condemned, or slighted. It is here re-published, and recommended as a closet piece, to recreate an intelligent mind in a vacant hour; for va-

cant

cant the reader must be from every strong prepossession, in order to relish an entertainment *(quod nequeo monstrare et sentio tantum)* which cannot be enjoyed to the degree it deserves, but by those of the most polite taste among scholars, the best breeding among gentlemen, and the least acquainted with sensual pleasure among the ladies.

The Editor is pleased to relate concerning "Cato," that a Play under that design was projected by the Author very early, and wholly laid aside; in advanced years he re-assumed the same design, and, many years after four acts were finished, he writ the fifth, and brought it upon the stage. All the Town knows how officious I was in bringing it on; and you, that know the Town, the Theatre, and mankind, very well, can judge how necessary it was to take measures for making a performance of that sort, excellent as it is, run into popular applause. I promised before it was acted, and performed my duty accordingly to the Author, that I would bring together so just an audience on the first days of it, it should be impossible for the vulgar to put its success or due applause to any hazard; but I do not mention this only to shew how good an *aid-de-camp* I was to Mr. Addison, but to shew also that the Editor does as much to cloud the merit of this work as I did to set it forth. Mr. Tickell's account of its being taken up, laid down, and at last perfected, after such long intervals and pauses, would make any one believe, who did not know Mr. Addison, that it was accomplished with the greatest pain and labour, and the issue rather of learning and industry than capacity and genius. But I do assure you, that never Play, which

which could bring the Author any reputation for wit and conduct, notwithstanding it was so long before it was finished, employed the Author so little a time in writing: if I remember right, the fifth act was written in less than a week's time; for this was particular in this Writer, that when he had taken his resolution, or made his plan for what he designed to write, he would walk about the room, and dictate it into language with as much freedom and ease as any one could write it down, and attend to the coherence and grammar of what he dictated. I have been often thus employed by him; and never took it into my head, though he only spoke it, and I took all the pains of throwing it upon paper, that I ought to call myself the writer of it. I will put all my credit among men of wit for the truth of my averment, when I presume to say, that no one but Mr. Addison was in any other way the writer of "The Drummer;" at the same time I will allow that he sent for me, which he could always do, from his natural power over me, as much as he could for any of his Clerks when he was Secretary of State; and told me "that a gentleman then in the room had written a Play that he was sure I would like; but it was to be a secret; and he knew I would take as much pains, since he recommended it, as I would for him."

I hope nobody will be wronged, or think himself aggrieved, that I give this rejected work where I do; and if a certain gentleman is injured by it, I will allow I have wronged him, upon this issue, that (if the *reputed* * Translator of the First Book

* It is plain by this passage that Steele knew the *real* translator. Mr. Gay, in a letter to Pope, July 8, 1715, says, "Sir Samuel

of Homer shall please to give us another Book) there shall appear another good judge in Poetry, besides Mr. Alexander Pope, who shall like it. But I detain you too long upon things that are too personal to myself; and will defer giving the world a true notion of the character and talents of Mr. Addison, till I can speak of that amiable gentleman on an occasion void of controversy. I shall then perhaps * say many things of him, which will be

Samuel Garth bid me tell you, that every body is pleased with your translation but a few at Button's; and that Sir Richard Steele told him, that Mr. Addison said, Tickell's translation was the best that ever was in any language."

* It may be inferred from this, that Steele intended to give the publick some memoirs of his excellent friend; and perhaps the materials for it may still exist among the papers that were collected towards the Life of the Duke of Marlborough; to whom *Captain Steele* had in 1710 thus addressed an Imitation of Horace, Book I. Ode VI.

" Should Addison's immortal verse
Your fame in arms, great Prince, rehearse,
With Anna's lightning you 'd appear,
And glitter o'er again in war,
Repeat the proud Bavarian's fall,
And in the Danube plunge the Gaul.
'Tis not for me your worth to show,
Or lead Achilles to the foe,
Describe stern Diomed in fight,
And put the wounded gods to flight;
I dare not, with unequal rage,
On such a mighty theme engage;
Nor sully in a verse like mine
Illustrious Anna's praise, and thine.
Let the laborious Epic lay,
In lofty lines, the chief display,
Who bears to distant realms his arms,
And strikes through Gallia dread alarms;

His

new even to you, with regard to him, in all parts of his character: for which I was so zealous, that I could not be contented with praising and adorning him as much as lay in my power, but was ever soliciting and putting my friends upon the same office. And since the Editor has adorned his heavy discourse with prose in rhime at the end of it, upon Mr. Addison's death, give me leave to atone for this long and tedious epistle, by giving you after it, what I dare say you will esteem, an excellent poem on his marriage *. I must conclude without satis-

His courage and his conduct tell,
And on his various virtues dwell.
In trifling cares my humble Muse
A less ambitious track pursues.
Instead of troops in battle mix'd,
And Gauls with British spears transfix'd,
She paints the soft distress and mien
Of Dames expiring with the spleen.
From the gay noise, affected air,
And little follies of the fair,
A slender stock of fame I raise,
And draw from *others* faults *my* praise."

* This was the following poem, by Mr. Welsted, addressed to the Countess of Warwick on her Marriage, Aug. 2, 1716:

" Ambition long has Woman's heart betray'd,
And tinsel grandeur caught th' unwary Maid;
The pompous styles, that strike th' admiring throng,
Have glitter'd in the eye of Beauty long:
You, Madam, first the female taste improve,
And give your fellow-charmers laws for Love;
A pomp you covet, not to Heralds known,
And sigh for virtues equal to your own;
Part in a man immortal greatly claim,
And frown on Titles, to ally with Fame:
Not Edward's star, emboss'd with silver rays,
Can vie in glory with thy Consort's bays;

His

fying as strong a desire as ever man had of saying something remarkably handsome to the person to whom I am writing; for you are so good a judge, that you will find out the endeavourer to be witty: and therefore, as I have tired you and myself, I will be contented with assuring you, which I do very honestly, I had rather have you satisfied with me on this subject than any other man living.

You will please to pardon me, that I have, thus, laid this nice affair before a person who has the acknowledged superiority to all others, not only in the most excellent talents, but possessing them with an equanimity, candour, and benevolence, which render those advantages a pleasure as great to the

His Country's pride does homage to thy charms,
And every merit crowds into thy arms.
While others gain light conquests by their eyes,
'Tis thine with wisdom to subdue the Wise:
To their soft chains while courtly beaux submit,
'Tis thine to lead in triumph captive Wit:
Her sighing vassals let Clarinda boast,
Of lace and languishing cockades the toast;
In Beauty's pride unenvy'd let her reign,
And share that wanton empire with the vain.
For thee the Arts of Greece and Rome combine;
And all the glories Cato gain'd are thine:
Still Warwick in thy boasted rank of life,
But more illustrious than when Warwick's wife.
Come forth, reveal thyself, thou chosen Bride,
And shew great Nassau's Poet by thy side;
Thy bright example shall instruct the Fair,
And future Nymphs shall make renown their care;
Embroidery less shall charm the Virgin's eye,
And kind Coquets for plumes less frequent die;
Secure shall Beauty reign, the Muse its guard;
The Muse shall triumph, Beauty its reward."

rest

rest of the world, as they can be to the owner of them. And since fame consists in the opinion of wise and good men, you must not blame me for taking the readiest way to baffle an attempt upon my reputation, by an address to one whom every wise and good man looks upon with the greatest affection and veneration.

I am, Sir,

Your most obliged, most obedient,
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

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469. TO KING GEORGE THE FIRST *.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY, [1722.]

AFTER having aspired to the highest and most laudable ambition, that of following the cause of Liberty, I should not have humbly petitioned your Majesty for a direction of the Theatre, had I not believed success in that province an happiness much to be wished by an honest man, and highly conducing to the prosperity of the commonwealth. It is in this view I lay before your Majesty a Comedy, which the audience, in justice to themselves, has supported and encouraged; and is the prelude of what, by your Majesty's influence and favour, may be attempted in future representations.

* Prefixed to "The Conscious Lovers."

The

The imperial mantle, the royal vestment, and the shining diadem, are what strike ordinary minds. But your Majesty's native goodness, your passion for Justice, and her constant assessor, Mercy, is what continually surrounds you, in the view of intelligent spirits, and gives hope to the suppliant, who sees he has more than succeeded in giving your Majesty an opportunity of doing good. Our King is above the greatness of Royalty; and every act of his will, which makes another man happy, has ten times more charms in it than one that makes himself appear raised above the condition of others. But even this carries unhappiness with it; for calm dominion, equal grandeur, and familiar greatness, do not easily affect the imagination of the vulgar, who cannot see power but in terror: and as fear moves mean spirits, and love prompts great ones to obey, the insinuations of malcontents are directed accordingly; and the unhappy people are insnared, from want of reflection, into disrespectful ideas of their gracious and amiable Sovereign; and then only begin to apprehend the greatness of their Master, when they have incurred his displeasure.

As your Majesty was invited to the Throne of a willing people for their own sakes, and has ever enjoyed it with contempt of the ostentation of it; we beseech you to protect us, who revere your title as we love your person. It is to be savage to be a rebel; and they who have fallen from you have not so much forfeited their allegiance, as lost their humanity. And therefore, if it were only to preserve myself from the imputation of being amongst the insensible and abandoned, I would beg permission,

in

in the most public manner possible, to profess myself, with the utmost sincerity and zeal,

Sire,

Your Majesty's

Most devoted subject and servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

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470. PREFACE TO "THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS."

THIS Comedy has been received with universal acceptance, for it was in every part excellently performed; and there needs no other applause of the actors, but that they excelled according to the dignity and difficulty of the character they represented. But this great favour done to the work in acting renders the expectation still the greater from the author, to keep up the spirit in the representation of the closet, or any other circumstance of the reader, whether alone or in company: to which I can only say, that it must be remembered, a Play is to be seen, and is made to be represented with the advantage of action, nor can appear but with half the spirit without it; for the greatest effect of a Play in reading is, to excite the reader to go see it; and when he does so, it is then a Play has the effect of example and precept *.

* A few days before the first representation the following paragraph appeared in the Newspapers: "Sir Richard Steele's excellent new Comedy, called *The Unfashionable Lovers*, will be acted on the sixth of next month. It is thought that this Play is the best modern Play that has been produced." Oct. 2, 1722.

The

The chief design of this was, to be an innocent performance; and the audience have abundantly showed how ready they are to support what is visibly intended that way; nor do I make any difficulty to acknowledge, that the whole was writ for the sake of the scene of the fourth act, wherein Mr. Bevil evades the quarrel with his friend; and hope it may have some effect with the Goths and Vandals that frequent the Theatres, or a more polite audience may supply their absence.

This incident, and the case of the father and daughter, are esteemed by some people no subjects of Comedy; but I cannot be of their mind; for any thing that has its foundation in happiness and success must be allowed to be the object of Comedy; and sure it must be an improvement of it, to introduce a joy too exquisite for laughter, that can have no spring but in delight, which is the case of this young lady. I must therefore contend, that the tears which were shed on that occasion flowed from reason and good sense; and that men ought not to be laughed at for weeping, till we are come to a more clear notion of what is to be imputed to the hardness of the head and the softness of the heart; and I think it was very politely said of Mr. Wilks, to one who told him there was a General weeping for Indiana, "I 'll warrant he 'll fight ne'er the worse for that." To be apt to give way to the impressions of humanity, is the excellence of a right disposition, and the natural working of a well-turned spirit. But, as I have suffered by Critics who are got no farther than to enquire whether they ought to be pleased or not, I would willingly find them properer matter for

for their employment, and revive here a song, which was omitted for want of a performer, and designed for the entertainment of Indiana. Signor Carbonelli, instead of it, played on the fiddle; and it is for want of a singer that such advantageous things are said of an instrument which were designed for a voice.

The song is the distress of a love-sick maid; and may be a fit entertainment for some small Criticks, to examine whether the passion is just, or the distress male or female.

"From place to place forlorn I go,
With downcast eyes a silent shade;
Forbidden to declare my woe;
To speak, till spoken to, afraid.

My inward pangs, my secret grief,
My soft consenting looks betray;
He loves, but gives me no relief;
Why speaks not he who may?"

It remains to say a word concerning Terence; and I am extremely surprised to find what Mr. Cibber told me prove a truth: That what I valued myself so much upon, the translation of him, should be imputed to me as a reproach. Mr. Cibber's zeal for the work, his care and application in instructing the actors, and altering the disposition of the scenes, when I was, through sickness, unable to cultivate such things myself, has been a very obliging favour and friendship to me. For this reason, I was very hardly persuaded to throw away Terence's celebrated funeral, and take only the bare authority of the young man's character; and how I have worked it into

into an Englishman, and made use of the same circumstances of discovering a daughter when we least hoped for one, is humbly submitted to the learned reader. RICH. STEELE.

471. FROM JOHN HIGHMORE*, ESQ.

SIR, 1722.

NO one, I believe, has a higher opinion of the "Conscious Lovers" in general than myself; or more admires the character of Indiana in particular, which is, I think, drawn with exquisite skill. She appears to be amiable in the highest degree, as her story is very judiciously told, and in the most affecting manner. But it grieves me to say, what, however, I apprehend to be too just, that the character of Bevil is strained beyond all reason. You have, I fear, instead of making his character proper to be imitated, rendered it such as no wise man ought to imitate; since it is possible, on his principles, for two persons of the strictest virtue, perfectly suited for each other, and in the highest degree sensible of it, with a competency in their own hands to answer all consequences, and with which they themselves are contented, to be made as miserable as total separation can be supposed to make them,

* The celebrated Painter. This Letter, though written in 1722, was first published in Gent. Mag. 1762, vol. XXXII. p. 404.—"An Epistle to Sir Richard Steele, on his Play called 'The Conscious Lovers,' was published by B. Victor, in 1722," 8vo.

merely

merely because a person, who happens to be a parent of one of them, takes it into his head that he has an absolute power of commanding (by virtue of that relation) one who is as much a man, and as capable of reasoning as himself, and a thousand times more intimately concerned in the affair about which he pretends to have so unlimited an authority. Now, to make this necessary, in order to preserve and support the character of a virtuous man and a good son, is highly injurious to virtue and filial duty, if these do not require it.

It is surprizing to hear people insist, as they do, on such absolute obedience to parents, especially Whigs, who, in political affairs, profess to act upon principles so much more reasonable. How can they who say (and I think rightly) that the good of the governed is the end of Government, and therefore wisely protest against Non-resistance and passive obedience, be so inconsistent with themselves, as to introduce those principles into Families, which they disavow in the State? Am I any more obliged to obey a Tyrant Father, than a Tyrant King? If not, why is my obedience to the former made absolute, and to the latter conditional?

No doubt, there are ages of life in which children ought to be subject to the absolute commands of their parents; and that for this plain reason, because at such ages those children are not arrived to the proper use of their own understanding: but, when they are, they ought to be treated accordingly, and no more commanded and corrected (both which should cease together) but reasoned with. And if that will not do, what then? How should one rea-

sonable creature treat another who does not see the force of his arguments? Ought he to break his head, or should he (as Mr. Locke proposes in his "Treatise on Education") pray for him; "which is all (he says) a Parent can or ought to do in such a case?" It will be no objection to the justness of this assertion, that the exact time when each child is fit to be treated in this way cannot be determined, any more than it is true that black and white are the same, because the edges of each may be so blended, that it will be impossible to say where the one begins and the other ends, though at a great distance from those edges the difference is sufficiently distinguishable; as are Virtue and Vice in the extremes, how difficult soever it may be to determine the bounds of each precisely.

I should not have given you or myself, Sir, any trouble on this subject, but that I fear this Play is capable of doing a great deal of mischief, on the account of which I have objected to it: for it is with great reluctance that I oppose Sir Richard Steele; because, I sincerely believe that he designs to promote the cause of Virtue, not only in this performance, but likewise in all his writings I have ever seen. I believe too that he has, in many respects, done it effectually, as I doubt not he has in every one aimed at it uprightly. And I likewise believe, no man could be more concerned to find his design frustrated herein than himself; and that, if he thought an alteration of any part of his performances would be more subservient to such his laudable design than the vindication of it, he would readily and cheerfully make it, as I, for my part, am not only

only willing, but desirous to be better informed, if I am mistaken.

Yours, &c. X. Y.

472. STEELE'S ACCOUNT,

From the 15th Sept. 1722, to the 9th March 1722-3.

The several balances	—		£868 10 0
Paid Sir Richard the 20th part		173 14 0	
Paid more to ditto	—	250 0 0	
In cash	— —	444 16 0	
June 18, 1723 *.		£868 10 0	

473. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

DEAR CHILD, MAY 24, 1723.

I SEND the franks for Mrs. Bullock, to whom I desire you to write with great gratitude and respect, always remembering the great obligation you have to her for so tender an education.

I am, dear Betty,

Your most affectionate father,
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

* "Dec. 16, 1723. Delivered to Sir Richard Steele the agreement of the Players, and the deed about the scenes, cloaths, &c."

474. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

MY DEAR CHILD, JULY 15, 1723.

I HAVE received a letter from you, but without a date; which, my dear, was a great omission. I ought not to find faults in so kind and so affectionate an epistle; but exactness is an excellent quality, which every one may be mistress of, and therefore I would not have you want it. I am much better than I was, and attribute my recovery to the prayers of my dear children. I have taken a great deal of pains to serve the world; and hope God will allow me some time to serve my own family *.

My good girl, employ yourself always in some good work, that you may be as good a woman as your mother. Pray remember me to dear little Molly; and know me for, Madam,

Your affectionate father, and humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

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475. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

MY DEAR CHILD, BATH, OCT. 1, 1723.

THIS confesses to my dear children, that I came to this place three weeks ago with a very heavy

* "We hear Sir Richard Steele will present the Town with another Comedy this winter." London Journal, Sept. 14, 1723. —This was his "School of Action;" the fragment of which is now for the first time printed. See pp. 1—44.

heart;

heart *; but I hope I am now better, and desire Betty to write to me, and let me know what she hears from Mrs. Bullock, and the like accounts; for my soul is wrapped up in your welfare; and

I am, dear children,

Your most affectionate father,
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

Direct "To Sir Richard Steele, Member of Parliament, at Bath."

476. TO MRS. MARTHA CENEY.

MADAM, BATH, NOV. 2, 1723.

I HAD a letter from you to supply you with money, on account of my lodgings at your house, which I am very sorry I was unable to do †. But when I come to town, I shall make it my immediate care to discharge it. But, as I believe all the time I shall spend in the country will hereafter be at the Bath, or in Wales, I beg the favour of you to take this letter for a dismission of the lodgings at Fulham; and believe me to be, with great truth,

Madam,

Your most obedient humble servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

* This is the first intimation of his severe distress.

† Steele received 500*l.* from the King for his Dedication to "The Conscious Lovers;" yet, notwithstanding his various resources, was always incurably necessitous.

477. TO

477. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

MY DEAR CHILD, BATH, NOV. 20, 1723.

I ACKNOWLEDGE the receipt of your kind letters; and desire you to write to me once every week, which will be a great comfort to me, and, I hope, hasten my recovery, and our meeting.

I am, dear child,

Your affectionate father,

and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

Love to Molly.

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478. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

MY DEAR CHILD, NOV. 22, 1723.

I HAVE your letter, with the news of Eugene's death *, and your reflections thereupon. Do you and your sister stay at home, and do not go to the funeral. Lord, grant me patience!

Pray write to me constantly.

Your affectionate father,

and obedient servant, RICH. STEELE.

Why do not you mention Molly? Is she dead too?

* See pp. 578, 591.

479. TO

479. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

DEAR BETTY, BATH, DEC. 2, 1723.

I HAVE your letter of the 30th from Mrs. Snow. I writ to Mrs. Nazereau in great concern, not hearing from you, and desired her to chide you very severely, if you were in health, for omitting to write to me in the distress you must needs think I was in when I heard nothing of you. Your *mourning* * was no manner of excuse; for you might have found time to write to your Father, whatever other business you had. I desire you would give my most humble service to Mrs. Snow; I know not how to behave myself under the obligation of your being such a trouble as you must needs be at her house. Let me know as soon as Mrs. Bullock comes to town. My service to Molly. I am, dear Betty,

Your affectionate father,
and most humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

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480. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

MY DEAR CHILD, BATH, DEC. 14, 1723.

YOU must pardon me if I write to you by a servant's hand, because I have a great deal of business to do to-night, and therefore cannot, under my present infirmity, do it in my own hand. I know

* For her Brother *Eugene*; see p. 630.

nothing

nothing of the gentlewoman with whom you are left, but depend very much upon Mrs. Bullock's conduct and judgment. You say the gentlewoman who is your governess is a very well-bred woman. If she proves so to me, I shall honour her as my sister, for the justice and kindness she shews to you. Pray shew her this letter, and tell her so. You say she never was abroad in any dependent way before. Pray desire her to write to me, to let me know what terms she is upon, that I may proceed accordingly for her service. I am, my dear child, most tenderly affected with the kind and prudent expressions in your letter; but cannot speak my mind to you till I see you, which, I hope, will be about the time the Parliament meets.

I am, dear Betty,

Your most affectionate father,

and most humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

Give my love to your sister Molly, and service to Mr. Snow and Mrs. Snow.

481. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

BATH, DEC. 21, 1723.

MY DEAREST DEAR CHILD,

I HAVE yours of the 19th, for which I thank you; am preparing to come to town. God grant a happy meeting between you and

Your most affectionate father,

and most humble servant, RICH. STEELE.

482. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

DEAR BETTY, BATH, JAN. 8, 1723-4.

THIS is to let you and your sister know I am in good health, and, dear creature,

Your affectionate father,
and most humble servant,

RICH. STEELE *.

My service to Mrs. Baker.

483. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

MY DEAR LITTLE GIRL, APRIL 5, 1724.

PRAY send me word when Mrs. Evans and you begin your journey, and let her know she shall be well received here by all us country people †. God send us an happy meeting!

Dear child,

Your affectionate father,
and humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

Give my service to the good old man, and to his son, and his sons, and his cousin Betty.

* In Feb. 1723-4, Parnell addressed to Steele a sixpenny pamphlet, intituled, "Remarks on Dacier."

† It does not appear *whence* this and the two following Letters were written; probably from the city of *Hereford*, to which place Sir Richard about this time retired, and was lodged and boarded there at the house of a mercer, who was his agent, and receiver of the rents of an encumbered estate of 600*l.* a-year, which Sir Richard obtained by his late wife. At his death it devolved to his two daughters.

484. PLAYHOUSE ACCOUNT,

1723 and 1724.

				£.	s.	d.
1723. November	2	—	—	21	0	0
	9	—	—	29	0	0
	16	—	—	21	0	0
	23	—	—	13	0	0
	30	—	—	58	0	0
December	7	—	—	53	0	0
	14	—	—	45	0	0
	21	—	—	67	0	0
	28	—	—	13	10	0
January	4	—	—	18	0	0
	11	—	—	0	0	0
	18	—	—	0	0	0
	25	—	—	0	0	0
February	1	—	—	20	0	0
	8	—	—	30	0	0
	15	—	—	8	0	0
	22	—	—	12	0	0
	29	—	—	27	0	0
March	7	—	—	24	0	0
	14	—	—	42	0	0
	21	—	—	15	0	0
				516	10	0
Paid Brodrick		—	—	80	0	0
Account of contingent money			—	20	14	11
Received the 26th May, 1724			£.	617	4	11

485. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE *.

DEAR BETTY, APRIL 8, 1724.

I DESIRE you to be carefully dressed to-day in your *black*, in order to receive a visitant in honour of your brother †. Let your sister be in her *white*; and be both as cheerfully suited as you can be.

I shall call upon you soon after dinner; and am your friend upon all occasions.

Dear Betty,

Your obedient, faithful father,

RICH. STEELE.

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486. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE.

DEAR BETTY, JUNE 25, 1724.

I WAS much troubled to find you were sent to my lodgings with your keys. I hope you will find every thing right there. But be exact in all your affairs hereafter, and we shall meet with fewer disappointments than we have hitherto met with.

I am your affectionate father,

RICH. STEELE.

* This and the next Letter were probably written from Hereford.

† See p. 630.

487. TO THE RIGHT HON. ROBERT WALPOLE.

SIR, CARMARTHEN *, AUG. 10, 1724.

IT is reported here that Mr. Clavering, now treasurer of St. David's, is to be made Bishop of Landaff.

In case that happens, I beg your favour to Mr. David Scurlock, to be steward of St. David's. The Bishop of Salisbury and Dr. Clarke will both give him their good character; and you will oblige the Gentry of these parts, who know he is well allied here; as well as you will do what you have always done to your creature,

and most obliged,
most obedient, humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

488. STEELE'S PROPOSALS TO MR. BARKER.

OCT. 18, 1724.

SIR Richard Steele proposes to Mr. Barker:

1st, To pay down one hundred pounds.

2d, To pay one hundred pounds more on the 30th of November, 1724.

* Sir Richard Steele retired; first to Hereford, and afterwards into Wales, — not, as Swift with more malignity than wit asserts,

"In perils of a thousand jails;"

but

3dly, To pay fifty pounds more on the 26th of February, 1724-5.

4thly, To pay fifty every year after on the 10th of December, till the whole debt is discharged *.

In the mean time there is a security of 3600*l.* given for the payment of all the money that is or shall become due to the said Mr. Barker, for his house in St. James's-street, in case of Sir Richard's death before the debt is finally paid.

but on the laudable principle of doing justice to his creditors; and at a time too when he had the fairest prospects of satisfying all their claims to the utmost farthing.—But this was not the first reflection which Swift had cast on his old associate.—In the Journal to Stella, Dec. 14, 1710, he says, "Yes, Steele was a little while in prison, or at least in a spunging-house, some time before I came, but not since."—And again July, 1712, "Steele was arrested the other day for making a Lottery, directly against an Act of Parliament. He is now under prosecution; but they think it will be dropped out of pity. I believe he will very soon lose his employment, for he has been mighty impertinent of late in his Spectators; and I will never offer a word in his behalf."—See before, p. 273.

* On another slip of paper Sir Richard has thus stated the debts which then stood out against him:

	£.	s.	d.
1724, Before Christmas, to Oliphant, —	189	0	0
Jan. 23, Woolley, — — —	200	0	0
Feb. 20, Barker, — — —	53	0	0
Ditto, Nov. 20, 1725, with interest, 100*l.*			
Ditto, Nov. 20, 1726, with interest, 100*l.*			
Gardiner, on Lady-day, 1725, — —	63	0	0
Yale, ditto, — —	40	0	0
Scot, ditto — — —	30	0	0
Hawes (Trustees) ditto — —	33	0	0
Ditto, on Lady-day, 1725, with interest 100*l.*			
£.	608	0	0

N. B.

N. B. That this debt may be sooner discharged than is above proposed, by contingent advantages of Sir Richard's bringing a Play * on the Stage next Winter, &c.

On the other hand, Mr. Barker is willing to take up his lease of the said house at Michaelmas.

489. TO MR. MORGAN †.

SIR, DEC. 7, 1724.

I HAD the other day the honour of a message from you by Mr. Prichard, with an account that you had the greatest respect and love for my daughter, and a request of my permission to make your address to her. I told Mr. Prichard, "that he who was to have her, must win her and wear her; that she was a girl of good sense, and I should take that with her in whomsoever pretended to her;" but, upon speaking of the same subject that evening, and mentioning your civility for her, to her, she told me with a great deal of calmness and ease, that

* Which he was then actually preparing; see p. 628.

† From a paper in the hand-writing of Miss Steele, afterwards Lady Trevor, intituled, "An exact copy of a letter my Father wrote to Mr. Edward Morgan, in answer to a message he sent him by Mr. Prichard, December the 6th, 1724."

"she

"she was very young *, and very well contented to wait her time and choice under my care;" and begged of me to let you know, that nothing could do her a greater offence than such an application. I told Mr. Prichard this the same evening; but I cannot forbid it with more earnestness than I do now, and desire you would give my service to your father, to whom I am, as well as to you, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

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490. FROM MR. MORGAN.

HONOURED SIR, DEC. 9, 1724.

I CAME on purpose, on Friday evening, to wait on you, in order to return you thanks for all favours, but particularly for the honour you were pleased to do me in signifying your and pretty Mrs. Steele's thoughts, in relation to her unfortunate, though sincere humble servant: but it seems my visit was unseasonable; and, since that time, I have not been very well, so hope you will pardon me for not making my acknowledgements earlier. Mr. Prichard was very just in delivering me your messages; but the last at once awed me into silence, otherwise I should not have been under the same roof without paying my respects to you; but, when I found my company was rather an offence than otherwise,

* She was then not quite sixteen.

I chose

I chose to withdraw. It is with the utmost concern that I observe the young lady is pleased to conceive a particular prejudice to me. However, notwithstanding all that, I must beg leave to assure you, that I shall always have the utmost veneration for worthy Sir Richard Steele, and his fair, but cruel, daughter, though with a disinterested view; and I sincerely wish her all the happiness imaginable in her choice; for since the lady, as I apprehend, is pleased to command my silence, I must acquiesce under the severe sentence, and shall endeavour to avoid giving either of you any offence; but, on the contrary, if ever it lies in my way to be serviceable to you or yours, none shall be readier to obey your commands than, good Sir,

Your most obliged,
and most obedient humble servant,
ED. MORGAN.

My humble service attends good Mrs. Steele *.

491. FROM MESSRS. WILKS, BOOTH, AND CIBBER.

SIR, LONDON, DEC. 12, 1724.

WE have long wished for your coming to town; but, are now obliged to desire you to make all possible speed to us. Our audiences decrease daily; and those low entertainments which you and we so

* Sir Richard's Sister.

heartily

heartily despise, draw the numbers, while we act only to the few who are blest with common sense. Though the Operas are allowed to be much worse than they were formerly, yet they draw much better audiences; and some persons of distinction, not to be named, have encouraged a set of *French Comedians* to come over by *subscription*, who are to act next Wednesday at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket. Thus, while there are three Playhouses exhibiting nonsense of different kinds against us, it is impossible we should subsist much longer. Both the Courts have forsaken us. All we can do is, to make the best of a losing game, and part from the whole upon the best terms we can. No person living, but ourselves, is sensible of the low state we are reduced to; therefore, we need not observe to you, how very needful it is to keep the secret *.

* These arguments of his Brother Patentees were not sufficient to draw Sir Richard Steele back into the world. On the contrary, he sold his share in the Playhouse, and entered into a litigation with the Patentees, which in 1726 was decided against him.—The particulars are thus stated by Mr. Cibber; "In all the transactions of life, there cannot be a more painful circumstance than a dispute in law with a man with whom we have long lived in an agreeable amity. But when Sir Richard," proceeds he, "to get himself out of difficulties, was obliged to throw his affairs into the hands of Lawyers and Trustees, upon that consideration the Friend and the Gentleman had no more to do in the matter. Thus, whilst Sir Richard no longer acted from himself, it can be no wonder if a flaw was found in our conduct for the Law to make work with. About three years before the lawsuit commenced, upon Sir Richard's total absenting himself from all care and management of the Stage, which, by our articles, he was equally and jointly with us obliged to attend, we let him know that we could not go on at that rate; but that, if he expected to make the business of a sinecure, we must be

There are several persons of fortune, that, we have reason to believe, would be glad to purchase our interests, and put it upon the foot of the Opera, by fixing the direction into an *Academy*, which is, we think, the only way to support and perpetuate

paid for our extraordinary care of it: we therefore intended to charge for it a salary of 1*l.* 13*s.*.4*d.* every acting day, for our management. To which in his composed manner he answered, "that, to be sure, we knew what was fittest to be done better than he did; that he had always taken a delight in making us easy, and had no reason to doubt of our doing him justice." And he never once objected to, or complained of, this for near three years together. But, though no man alive can write better of œconomy, yet perhaps no man is more above the drudgery of practising it. He was often in want of money; and, while we were in friendship with him, we assisted his occasions; but this compliance had so unfortunate an effect, that it only heightened his importunity of borrowing more; and the more we lent, the less he minded us, or shewed any concern for our welfare. Upon this we stopped our hands at once, and peremptorily refused to advance another shilling, till by the balance of our accounts it became due to him. This treatment, though we hope not in the least unjustifiable, we have reason to believe, so ruffled his temper, that he at once was as short with us as we had been with him; for, from that day, he never came near us; nay, he not only continued to neglect what he should have done, but did what he ought not to have done: he made an assignment of his share without our consent, in manifest breach of our agreement. Our part suffered this neglect, since his rank and figure in the world were of extraordinary service to us. The cause was heard before Sir Joseph Jekyl; and the issue was, that, Sir Richard not having made any objection to what we had charged for management for three years together, as our proceedings had been all transacted in open day, without any clandestine intention of fraud, we were allowed the sums in dispute above mentioned; and Sir Richard not being advised to apply to the Lord Chancellor, both parties paid their own costs, and determined this should be the last Law-suit between them."

the

the English Theatre. We have nothing more to add, but our hearty wishes for your health, and quick arrival among us, and in the mean time to beg your speedy answer.

We are, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servants,

ROBERT WILKS, B. BOOTH, C. CIBBER.

P. S. Our profits were ever more than double to what they have been this year, and we are very far from any hopes of their growing better. Our proposal of parting with our interests, will still leave room for any of us to be adventurers, upon this new scheme, in what proportion we please.

492. FROM MR. MORGAN.

HONOURED SIR, DEC. 19, 1724.

I AM so much at a loss for a sufficient apology for my importunity on this occasion, that I submit myself entirely to your clemency, which, by all accounts, has hitherto been very extensive, but particularly so in favour of the distressed; which since it is my misfortune to be one of that body at present, I hope to meet with your indulgence, if not compassion.

Self-preservation is what is natural to most; and, with that view, I flatter myself, you will pardon me, if I once more beg a favourable thought from

you, and, if possible, from the young lady your daughter; for her most irresistible charms have, in my own defence, obliged me to be thus troublesome. Give me leave then, dear Sir, to tell you, that I find it is impossible for me to avoid having the utmost love and respect for pretty Mrs. Steele, though, in pursuance to her severe decree, which I hope is not yet final, I have made it my study to act as agreeably thereto as possibly I could; for, rather than give her the least uneasiness, I would torture myself first. I do not doubt but my father's circumstances and mine have been rendered to you in a worse light than what, probably, upon a due enquiry, they may appear to be. I beg leave to assure you, that my designs are grounded upon a foot of honour; and then, I hope, you will imagine those affairs must have come to light. However, it is an usual thing to meet with back-friends upon these occasions; but probably I may find them out at long-run.

Were it possible the lady could conquer all objections to my person, I believe I should be able to convince you that my fortune is not despicable; yet I must own it is a trifle when in competition with so much personal merit, which to me outbalances fortune, any more than what may be absolutely necessary to render the affairs of this world as happy as may be: but, were I master of ever so great a fortune, I should never think it so well bestowed as upon your daughter. I heartily ask pardon for trespassing so long upon your patience; so shall only beg that my most sincere humble service may be

be acceptable to the young lady; and that you would believe that I am, with the utmost respect,

Sir, Your most obliged
and obedient humble servant,
ED. MORGAN.

493. TO MR. MORGAN *.

SIR, DEC. 20, 1724.

I HAVE the favour of yours of the 19th instant, about the same matter to which I thought I had fully answered before. Speaking of "back-friends" is unnecessary, for indeed nobody can have any power with me but what should be necessary for affairs of that kind concerning which I am talking: therefore nobody could possibly lay any exceptions concerning you, or your family. But there was no dispute raised about that matter in the least; the young woman did not enter into any enquiry concerning your circumstances, neither does she yet. Therefore I earnestly desire you will lay aside all thoughts of this kind: for the child is young and discreet; and utterly declares against admitting your courtship, which I desire you would please to forbear, and you will very much oblige, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,
RICH. STEELE.

* From a paper in the hand-writing of Lady Trevor, intituled, "An exact copy of an answer my Father wrote to a letter of Mr. Morgan's, December the 20th, 1724."

494. TO MRS. MOLLY STEELE.

DEAR MOLLY, HEREFORD, FEB. 6, 1724-5.

MY Cousin Scurlock sends me word, you are mighty uneasy for coming hither. My dear child, you stayed at your own request, and I am heartily glad that you think of coming to me, where you shall enjoy all the happiness that you can. I am glad also to hear my Cousin thinks of coming with you when the coach comes to Hereford in better time. She shall have all the welcome this place will afford her; which you may tell her, from

Your affectionate father, RICH. STEELE.

495. FROM MR. PLAXTON *.

HONOURED SIR, JULY 22, 1725.

Behold the Speech in Hamlet,

Pope's Edition, page 400.

TO be, or not to be *? That is the question;
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The stings and arrows of outrageous fortune;

* This Letter, directed "To Sir Richard Steele, Member of Parliament, at Carmarthen," relates to his Comedy of "The School of Action," which he was then preparing for the Stage (see pp 1—44); and to which the memorandum in p. 648. has also reference.

Or

Or to take arms against a sea * of troubles,
And by opposing end them?—To die—to sleep—
No more: and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to; 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd, to die—to sleep—
To sleep? perchance to dream; ay, there's the rub,
For in that sleep of Death what dreams may come,
When we have shifted off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life:
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrongs, the proud † man's contumely,
The pang of despis'd Love, the Law's delay,
The insolence of Office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes;
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardles bear,
To groan and sweat under a weary life?
But that the dread of something after death
(That undiscover'd country from whose bourne
No traveller returns) puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of.
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprizes of great pith and moment,
With this regard their currents turn ‡ awry,
And lose the name of action. Soft you now—

* Perhaps *siege*, which continues the metaphor of slings, arrows, taking arms, and represents being encompassed on all sides with troubles. POPE.

† Poor. POPE. ‡ Away. POPE.

The

The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orions
Be all my sins remembered *.

I have sent it with a remark of Mr. Pope's, and various readings marked with his name.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

W. PLAXTON †.

496. TO MRS. ELIZABETH STEELE ‡.

MY DEAREST CHILD, MARCH 3, 1725-6.

YOU were indiscreet to send Sandy here yesterday night; for he is a gentleman I have some reason to know very well.

* "Mr. Gwillim speaks this speech in the Welsh tone, looking at the gentlemen suspiciously; not speaking improperly, but as he is a Welshman.—All the time that Gwillim speaks, he is acted to his face, but no appearance of ridicule, for he is in danger of breaking out upon them." STEELE.

† The following memoranda are in Steele's hand-writing:

"*Mem.* That the character of Sir John Edgar be enlivened with a secret vanity about Family. And let Mrs. Cœland, the Merchant's wife, have the same sort of pride, rejoicing in her own high blood, despising her husband's pedigree, and affecting to marry her daughter to a relation of her own. To take off the stain of the low birth of her husband's side, it is objected, that in the reign of Edward III. a relation of hers was a packer, and Lord Mayor of London; the only scandal to her family, which she owns, and cannot help. Make Mr. Symberton such a sort of coxcomb as at first designed; still more ridiculous and unsufferable from his talents and improvements." STEELE.

‡ There is no direction to this Letter; but at the bottom of it is written *Mr. Plaxton;* (see the preceding Letser); and it is indorsed, by Lady Trevor, "My Father's."

Give

Give my most humble service to Mrs. Scurlock, and to Mrs. Bevans. There is no need of bidding you be civil to all you see kind to me. I am, dear girl,

Your dutiful and compassionate father,

RICH. STEELE.

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497. FROM THE REV. WILLIAM ASPLIN *.

SIR, MARCH 2, 1727-8.

IN the brightest days of Britain, when Bickerstaff presided in the chair of Wit, and o'er this happy land showered *manna* down, which suited every taste, I had the honour (though unworthy and unknown) to be accepted as an humble Correspondent. And it gives me now a melancholy reflexion, when I am once more inclined to visit the world in print, that the only person who introduced me to it is himself retired.—To be an intruder upon solitude, I am conscious, is rudeness; but, as the greatest souls have never been so much adored as when departed, suffer me, Sir, to approach your recess (which ought to be sacred) with the reverence due to the Genius of our Isles, and to make this small oblation of gratitude to the immortal *manes* of the SPECTATOR.

I am, Sir, &c. W. ASPLIN.

* Of St. Alban Hall, Oxford, where he took the degree of M. A. in 1710. He was afterwards settled at or near Banbury; and published, in 1728, "*Alkibla*, a disquisition upon worshiping towards the East;" to which the Letter here printed was prefixed.

498. TO

498. TO MRS. MARY STEELE.

MY DEAR, DEAR MOLLY, . JULY 22, 1728.

I WRITE to you because Mr. Duke is going to Bristol. I desire you would give my service to Dr. Lane; and remember, dear Molly,

Your ever loving and affectionate father,

RICH. STEELE.

We are here in great joy because my mare has brought a foal, *a male one*, after eleven months time *.

* This is believed to be the last Letter Steele wrote. He was attacked some time before with a paralytic disorder, which greatly impaired his understanding; and in that melancholy state he was carried to Carmarthen. Mr. Victor says, "I was told he retained his cheerful sweetness of temper to the last; and would often be carried out in a summer's evening, where the country lads and lasses were assembled at their rural sports, —and, with his pencil, gave an order on his agent, the mercer, for a new gown to the best dancer. In the year 1727, when I was a 'levee-hunter,' and making an interest with the first Minister, that good old man hearing of it, inclosed me an open letter to Sir Robert Walpole, that, I remember, began thus: 'If the recommendation of the most obliged man can be of any service to the bearer'—Sir Robert received it with his usual politeness."—"Dramatic Pieces, Poems, and Original Letters," 1776, vol. I. p. 330.—Steele died at Carmarthen, Sept. 1, 1729; and was interred, according to his own desire, in the town chancel, on the fourth of the same month.

"On Monday the first instant, at about ten at night, died at Carmarthen, in South Wales, Sir Richard Steele, knight, well known by his many eminent writings. He formerly served in parliament for the boroughs of Stockbridge, Boroughbridge, and Wendover, and passed through several eminent stations, *viz.* a Commissioner of the Forfeited Estates, Master of the Theatre-

499. MR. MEYRICKE TO MISS STEELE*.

MADAM, PEMBROKESHIRE.

I HAVE lately heard a very excellent character of the honesty of John Trelogan; and, as I know how to esteem every recommendation of yours, I therefore employ him in a case of the highest importance to myself, the carriage of a hundred weight of love, right good as any in England, at your service. Do not let your generous temper be in pain to make any return; I must ask none. Allow me leave to send you all I have, for I am abundantly supplied, and think it no trouble; for, believe me, it is no trouble at all, Cousin. In mighty pain surely, I have convinced you, Madam, how conformable I can be to your command, since I have left your presence, where my only quiet and repose dwell. It is true, I might find more safety; but I buy it at a most extravagant purchase. You will, perhaps, draw a charge of a very ready shew of disobedience

Theatre-royal in Drury-lane, &c. He married the only child and heiress of John [Jonathan] Scurlock, of the town of Carmarthen, esq. by whom he had issue two daughters, who are unmarried." Weekly Medley, Sept. 13, 1729.

"We hear a stately monument will be put up in Westminster Abbey to the memory of Sir Richard Steele, at the expence of Sir Robert Walpole." British Journal, Sept. 20, 1729.

* Of this and the ten following letters, nine are undated, and it is not easy to place them in their exact order of time. From three of them the name of the writer is cut off. The handwriting, however, shews that this and five others are from Mr. Meyricke. Letter 503, is in a different hand.

even

even in my declaration of it, because you have commanded me not to love: but, not to love, is not to live; and not to love you, would be death in the worst form it can appear in. Do not, my fair unbeliever, urge my crime in this, since I would die to be obedient to you in any thing; for it is the just resolve and constitution of my mind. If my passion can be recommended by its purity, by its religious and heavenly fondness, it has that, and yet much more, to say for itself, if you would hear it. When you meet with any body that can love you better, that will more readily subject his little life and fortune to your pleasure and inclination, I must then only learn to be content from your happiness, and I must for ever own myself in the most religious rights, and greatest tenderness of my soul,

Dear Mrs. Steele,

Your most passionately fond admirer,
and evermore devoted,

ESSEX Mck MEYRICKE *.

500. MR. MEYRICKE TO MISS STEELE.

BUSH, THURSDAY, JAN. 6, 1730.

MADAM,

COULD I apprehend any danger when I conform to your commands, I might have been extremely sensible of it last Monday night, when I met about

* The name is cut away.

a thou-

a thousand coal-pits, with open mouths ready to devour me, just covered over with snow, and, under that disguise of their complection, might have ensnared a man much more in his senses than myself. In all these threatening dangers, my charming Stella diverted my thoughts; and every the greatest fright and fear was removed from before my eyes by the pleasing idea I had of that lovely creature. Thus, Madam, am I thankful for the noble inspiration you give my soul of courage and constancy, which will enable me to brave the fury of every storm I can possibly meet with in life. It may, indeed, be very inconsistent with a modern fine gentleman, or a lover, before his mistress, to offer any thanksgiving to the Divine Providence for his protection; but sure it cannot offend the good, the pious Miss Steele. No; it is to that Infinite, All-wise Being, who trieth the very heart, that I pray to shew me mercy; to Him let me be instant in prayer, who sees all things intuitively: and may his influence direct and govern you when it is possible for your own human prudence to fail you!—I am, my lovely creature, every way engaged to you; and surely it concerns you not a little, in the excellency of your mind as a good Christian, to support me a little better under my present inquietude, and great suspence of happiness. Oh! would you but take one view of my soul, and see the rejoicings it has at the pleasure you could give it! Do, my charmer, lay one obligation upon me, which every part of my life would be industriously employed to return. I wish you would see with what a disinterested passion I am yours. But why should I be thus importunate to

to a generous mind, which has the gift of charity? I pray the Almighty to govern and direct you in the right use of it; and believe me,

Dear Miss Steele,

to be for ever yours,

ESSEX Mck MEYRICKE.

If you cannot send me something to live upon here, I must see Carmarthen soon; *shall I?*

501. MR. MEYRICKE TO MISS STEELE*.

MADAM, [undated].

IT seems it is in love, as it is in the worship of the Gods: we are still to supplicate, still to pray, though the Deity we adore gives us no positive assurance of mercy, by a gracious appearance or promise to us. We are bid, indeed, in one case, to "hear Moses and the Prophets;" but such are my unhappy circumstances, that I have no certain known rules to go by; however, I shall keep close to the letter of the law, and "love without ceasing." Under this uncertain state and perplexity I may, with more justice than the child-bed lady, ask, "What have I done, ye Gods, to deserve thus?" Be still, O my soul! and please thyself with those imaginations, that thy great distractions will, some time or other, have a happy end. The SPECTATOR

* The name is cut from this Letter; but it is Mr. Meyricke's hand-writing.

has

has observed, that "to be enamoured with a lady of sense and virtue, is an improvement of the understanding and morals." I own I have an exceeding good opinion of my Governess; only I think her discipline a little too rigid and severe at present for my tender nature; but I hope there will be nothing wanting in her indulgent care, as I am sure there shall not in my honest endeavours * . . .

. . . . . .

I wish you would suffer it to be argued "by myself or counsel †." I will make my regard known for your person by every thing that can be done. I esteem you too precious to be bought or sold; or I would offer all I have with a frank and honest heart, which you shall be acquainted with as soon as you please. My rivals may probably be better able to purchase the pleasant fields of Langunnor ‡, which have so many beauties and delights, that I would wish you, as a friend, never to part with them: but I fain would be the purchaser of your person; and I freely bid my life and fortune, which I shall never have occasion to murmur or repine at, till you declare them below your notice. Teach me, oh! instruct me, dear Miss Steele, how to value both, and let me live in love and truth eternally yours.

Your horse has promised me the honour of a visit to-morrow.

* Here a few words are purposely cut out.

† The privilege requested by Petitioners to Parliament.

‡ A view of the house of Langunnor may be seen in the Gentleman's Magazine, for 1797, vol. LXVII. p. 457.

502. MR. MEYRICKE TO MISS STEELE.

BUSH, SUNDAY MORN, 8 O'CLOCK *.

MADAM,

ACCORDING to the best calculation I can make, it is now a hundred and sixteen hours, thirteen minutes, and three seconds, &c. since I left Carmarthen; a very tedious and melancholy time, under which I have been chiefly supported by the parson of the parish, who is indeed a good sensible brown man, only a little unhappy in his too great relish for the very thirsty weed of tobacco, and the liquid manufacture of our country, ale. The near approach of the very solemn season just at hand, led us into conversation suitable to the occasion; and, in the progress of our discourse, he so well insinuated himself into a familiarity with me, that he gained the inmost recesses of my soul, where he found such gloomy sorrow and sadness as drew his compassion, and, I hope, may in time deserve yours, or I must have recourse to him, or some more able and discreet minister, for ghostly counsel, &c. The poor man, in the honesty of his heart, for the good of Religion, and to the best of his capacity, directed the most religious use of my affections, and urged very strong and sacred reasons against "setting my heart too much upon the things of this world." But such is the depravity of nature, dear Doctor, I cannot help it. Heaven for-

* There is no other date to this Letter, which is directed to be left "at Mrs. Scurlock's."

give

give me, if it can be my offence to love Miss Steele too much, and punish me for that crime towards any other lady! Being at present in a good disposition of mind to prepare myself for the next world, I intend, by the assistance of God, this day to answer the most positive command of Heaven; and I am persuaded, in the purity of my conscience, that I can give no offence in this very solemn assurance under my hand, that I love you above the world, abstracted from any views of fortune, but merely on account of your agreeable person, pretty sense, most excellent temper, and very sweet endowments of good-nature in its primitive sense. But, if your resolutions are unalterable, your inclinations different from any thing in me, and you can neither be thus charitable or generous as to reward so well-grounded a passion, I can then greatly lament my endless misfortune, and resolve never more to give trouble, or offence, where I love so well. But, if you are not very determined to the contrary, I will chearfully serve in great constancy your own time, though naturally as impatient a lover as you have met with. Do not absolutely despise the honesty and simplicity of this heart; if you resolve against it, urge its crime in loving too much, and declare your dislike of too fond a husband. You may most certainly oblige me so far, as to make me conform to every thing you please; for I know not how it happens, but so it is, I had much rather be your slave, than claim a superiority over any lady I ever saw. Your generous temper may, perhaps, despise so servile a declaration; but think it is to you only I can so far resign myself. Perhaps you may like

better to be treated with the power and authority of a very husband. Indeed you may trust yourself with any person, for you have such winning engagements as can soothe and soften the most contradictory temper; therefore you need not wish a greater variety of choice. Lose as little time as possible, for your joys will be confirmed at a time when other people are to be wished into them by their friends. You have admirers enough, Madam, to pay you compliments; but if truths, as divine and sacred as any I have found in good books, which I have been conversant with these three days, can recommend what I say, you are beyond expression dear to me; and every thing you do, and say, gives me admiration and pleasure, but when you speak my death. I have been so very happy as to be supported by the most engaging friendship that I have yet met with in life, without which I had sunk in very bitter anguish of thought long before this day.

May you be blessed with all that Heaven can send you; and believe me to be, from my inmost soul,

Dear Miss Steele,

Yours, as much as possible man can be,

ESSEX Mck MEYRICKE.

My nerves, Madam, are exceeding good; for my shaking hand is only a natural consequence of my aching heart at this juncture.

503. [MR. HARCOURT] TO MISS STEELE *.

"OUT of sight out of mind," is a proverb which, on many occasions, might be founded in truth. Miss Steele, perhaps, at present may best know wherein it has been verified. Give me leave to assure you, it is not so with me in respect to one who is the very grace and ornament of her sex.

Permit me, Madam, to send you this now only as the tribute of my wishes, where my poor services in time past were, or would be now, less regarded. However, had you thought me worthy of that heart, which you keep reserved for some other, happily you would have found me not the least faithful, nor the least sensible of the obligation. But beauty, goodness, and good-sense, such as you are the happy mistress of, will always claim the best wishes and good-will of the most uncivilized and barbarous. But since praise from some, even to the most praiseworthy, will be found unacceptable; myself too

* "In Carmarthen, South Wales. Turn at Gloucester."

The name is cut away from this Letter, which is in a different hand-writing from the four which precede, and the two that follow. It is also undated; but was probably written about March 1730, a little before the death of Mrs. Mary Steele, which happened at Bristol, of a lingering consumption, April 18.—I am inclined to believe it to be from Mr. Harcourt.—In a news-paper of the time is the following article: "April 28, 1730, a marriage is concluded between Mr. Harcourt, a Carmarthenshire gentleman, and the eldest daughter of Sir Richard Steele." I need not add, this was equally false with the report of her being married to Mr. Philips. See Letters 507, and 509.

conscious of the application, I shall decline the unwelcome task.

It would be too romantic to tell you into what an abyss of melancholy * . . . . . fell into on parting from you (Heavens forbid the omen!) I hope no presage of any ill accident. Why could not I, the most faithful, though meanest, of your servants, be permitted to see you to your journey's end? I could have returned with pleasure had I but seen you safe; but you thought otherwise, and it becomes me to be silent.

* . . . . . .

I hope her late indisposition has left her; if not, I hope no time will be lost towards a speedy application for the recovery of her health. Her returning to the Hot-well, as she talked of, would be the best resolution she could take. I find a very sensible benefit already by these waters. I would with pleasure meet her half way, could I but know the time of her coming; but the fear of disobliging a lady of my acquaintance prevents me in the pleasure of waiting upon her at Carmarthen.

Fairest, adieu!

* Several words are here cut away.

504. FROM MISS STEELE TO [MR. TREVOR *.]

SIR, [1730.]

MY time and my thoughts are so employed about my poor sister (who grows worse every day), that I could not sooner acknowledge the favour of your obliging letters. I have a true sense of what I owe you for the trouble you take in our affairs. I am glad you have brought the Players † to such good terms; and I sincerely wish it may ever be as much in my power, as I am sure it will always be in my inclination, to shew my gratitude to you for the many favours and civilities you have conferred on my sister and self.

Your kind enquiry relating to Dan-y-park estate, is another instance of your friendship to me; but

* This is a copy, in Lady Trevor's hand-writing, of a letter to some friend in London. And to whom so probable as to Mr. (afterwards Lord) Trevor, then eminent in the profession of the law, and whom she next year married? Letter 507 is known to be in *his* hand-writing. Neither of them is dated. But on the blank leaf of the Lady's she has written what will fix it within a day or two:

"March the 25th.	Sister's washing	0	2	9
	My own	0	2	5½
		0	5	2½"

† Sir Richard Steele's remaining interest in Drury-lane Theatre became, after his death, the joint property of his two daughters, and, on the death of the younger of them, devolved to Elizabeth the elder, who sold it for no inconsiderable sum [it was 1200*l.* See Biog. Brit. p. 3830.] But, as if a fatality attended the business, the attorney who received the money for her ran away with the whole, and she never received a penny.

you

you will allow me the liberty to say, that I think the satisfaction given you so deficient, and so little to the purpose, that, from this moment, I take a resolution to put an absolute stop to that affair. Mr. George Harcourt's pretending to send to his uncle for the particulars of an estate to be settled upon him, which I was always made to believe was actually to be his by an old entail, and consequently out of his uncle's power to give from him, is so inconsistent with the account which my, or rather his, friends gave me of it, that I can no way account for it. There have been so many impositions in regard to Mr. Lewis Harcourt's estate detected, that I never repented any thing more, than that I was persuaded to enter at first into any treaty with Mr. George Harcourt. The first representations to me were, that all Mr. Lewis Harcourt's estate was entailed upon his nephew. In some time after I was informed there was a mortgage of twelve hundred pounds upon his estate, which was a plain discovery that part of his estate was in his own power; and I believe you are convinced that two hundred pounds a year of his estate is settled on his daughters. Now these are impositions of so gross and shocking a nature, that they are hardly to be paralleled. When Mr. Harcourt was introduced to me by Mrs. Bevan, Mrs. Lloyd of Danyralt, and Mr. Sandy (all three my nearest relations), they told me he had an estate of eight hundred pounds a-year; that he had a place of seven hundred pounds a-year, which, with a chance of money from his aunt, was such a fortune as I could not disapprove. The uncommon merit of the gentleman was their daily theme:

theme: their perpetual and importunate solicitations were the first motives that indueed me to think of it. Convinced by their reasoning that I might probably be happy in a change of my condition so much to my advantage, I submitted, and preferred their judgment to my own inclination; and things went on accordingly, when, to my great surprize, I found them very much mistaken in regard to his fortune. These things of themselves are very good and sufficient reasons for breaking off with Mr. Harcourt: but the melancholy circumstance I have to add is, that, notwithstanding my endeavours, I find it is not in my power to have an affection for the gentleman, which a woman ought to have for the person she makes choice of for the companion of her life. I did all I could to make him sensible of this when last in the country. I have an aversion to the thoughts of it, which I can never overcome. It does not proceed from any want of merit in him. I think him very deserving; but we cannot command our affections; and I flatter myself that you, who are my friend, cannot find fault with me; for, if the regard is not mutual in marriage, the consequence must be miserable. I heartily wish cousin Harcourt all the happiness the state can afford in a better choice. I am apprehensive that my friends at Carmarthen, especially Mrs. Bevan and Mr. Sandy, will be irreconcileable on this occasion.

It is very much my inclination to live with my relations, for nobody can have a greater tenderness for them than I have, and I propose great satisfaction in continuing with them; but, if they will not receive me, I must be content: I hope I am not so destitute

destitute of friends as to despair of a reception elsewhere.

505. MR. MEYRICKE TO MISS STEELE.

TUESDAY MORN.

I HOPE dear Miss Steele has enjoyed as good rest as I have wished her, for I have been awake the whole night in very thought for her repose and happiness. Yesterday's sun was the most tedious that ever shone; and I can scarce live another under the affliction you bear *, unless you moderate it by the refined sense and reason you are mistress of; which, by abundance of good-nature, I fear you make more useful to your friends than yourself: yet, for pity's sake, let not Mrs. Bevan, whom I must ever value, want any comfort from your persuasive, healing tongue. Pardon me, I would mention nothing but what I hope may concur with your sentiments.

Do not, my charmer, by any means destroy your health, which is far more valuable to me than my life. My heart aches for you, and longs to tell you its sufferings. I want very much to see you, and would, if possible, more than share your grief. I could drink the tears which shower down so fast, the bitter affliction of my soul; but let me forget

* This letter from Mr. Meyricke is undated; but probably was written in May 1730, a short time after the death of Mrs. Mary Steele.

that

that there ever was affliction, pain, or sorrow, born into the world, and be for ever yours,

ESSEX Mck MEYRICKE.

506. MISS STEELE TO [MR. MEYRICKE.]*

SIR,

I AM surprized to find you persist in giving yourself and me a trouble which I have so often told you would be to no effect. As you are a gentleman of great merit, I wish you may be blessed with the best and most agreeable of the sex; but, for my own part, I am unalterably determined never to think of marrying you. Therefore I hope justice to yourself will prevail, when I make it my request, that you will from this moment desist from giving yourself, your friends, or me, any farther trouble on this occasion.

I am, Sir, &c.

* It does not appear to whom this undated letter was addressed; but probably to Mr. Meyricke.

507. MR. TREVOR TO MISS STEELE *.

DEAR MISS STEELE,

THE general confirmation I meet with from all hands, that you have lately dismissed a gentleman esteemed the nearest your regard, persuades me to declare a passion which can rest no longer unrevealed, or, more properly, unrepeated. But the good sense and discernment that distinguishes you from the multitude of your sex, will excuse a representation of the tragical tales of love: though this case is generally required to be as methodically stated to a fair lady, as a case of dangerous ill-health is to a physician. Without farther preamble, Madam, my design is to assure you, that you are the lady that, from all the laws of Love, I have pictured in my imagination most agreeable: and every thing that is to be said upon this head is, "I LOVE YOU." But though you will object, that I tell almost every lady the same story; I grant I do, those I like: some have been so good as to believe me, and soften the care and concern that the most unchristian and unbelieving part of the sex hath created. But to none have I confessed the attraction of my soul so far, that I would, what shall I say? marry them. No; never was I so daring, so bold in thought, till the year 1729-30, and the 24th year

* This letter, which is undated, except that the year 1729-30 occurs in the middle of it, is in the hand-writing of the Hon. John (afterwards Lord) Trevor. He married Miss Steele, May 31, 1732. See Letters 503 and 509.

of

of my age, when I was so fortunate, or unfortunate, as you decree, to behold the resistless charms of the most engaging. But of this enough. I wish I could guess at what was the most prevailing passion in your breast. Give me leave then to consider you as a woman with a share and proportion of pride, but so much as is barely ornamental. Here vanity will naturally take place, and incline you to the love of wealth, honour, &c. You will then imagine that this comes from a blue, green, or red ribband, which is from neither. But every thing that is good and great, every joy and bliss, will be complete in him, when you are in his arms. If settlements are to take place, what I can offer will, I hope, be not unequal to your fortune, though inferior to your deserts. I wish Heaven had made me master of every thing you desire, that every inclination of yours might be satisfied. If you are disposed to think seriously on this point, there must be a provision for the younger children, which Providence will not fail, under honest industry, to bless us with. This is the first proposal I have ever made, and I may be unacquainted with the form; in which if I have erred, I hope you can have goodness enough in your heart to forgive your lover. But I must here take the additional name of friend, and earnestly exhort you, as it concerns the duty of your religion, yourself, and all that is dear and near to you, never to marry a man that you cannot unite with even in soul. Here is the harmony, the bliss of a married state; which I most sincerely wish you happy in, though it ends in my own ruin. But this you are not to hope for, if you would violate a

true

true passion with the consideration of riches, titles, or such glittering toys. The decrees of Heaven are against you, and cry aloud, *Revenge!* What remains for me is, to assure you, that, without vanity, I love myself exceeding well, and can heartily love you if you will do so too. Begin then to dispose yourself that way; consult Heaven, and ask whether your gratitude is not concerned. Arguments may be more prevailing from your generous temper, if you will use them, than any I can offer; and I believe you generous in every thing but towards me. No news sticks to me, but of the sufferings of mankind. There is an unhappy gentleman, whom I dare not describe lest you should discover him, who is seemingly very restless in mind and temper, seeks amusement and diversion every evening in the several theatres of the Hay-market and Drury-lane, &c. But the most harmonious elegance of the first seems an ungrateful discord; and even the wit and humour, with which your Father has so happily furnished the latter, cannot divert his thoughts in the absence of his Daughter.

Who can be barbarous enough to laugh at misfortunes when they themselves have occasioned them? My passion is too singular to need a name, or to be imputed to any other than

The slighted and unhappy POLYDORE *.

* Mr. Trevor was at this time one of his Majesty's Justices of the Grand Sessions for the counties of Carmarthen, Pembroke, and Cardigan; and was appointed one of the King's Counsel, May 15, 1730. By his interest Mr. Alexander Scurlock, an attorney, was made prothonotary of the abovementioned counties in January 1729-30.

508. MR. MEYRICKE TO MRS. LLOYD.

PONTVANE, NOV. 25, 1730.

DEAR COUSIN LLOYD,

SINCE I have been driven out of Paradise, I have long wandered up and down forlorn and desolate: at length have reached Pontvane, where my spirits are animated with a large glass of generous wine to your more generous health, and I am just supported by the delightful cordial of a healing and honest friendship. Having great confidence in John Trelogan, I have taken leave to send you six dozen of wine, carriage paid: it is the blushings of Milford, and, I hope, very good; but excuse me if I recommend it to be kept warm in straw, for it must not be chilled, or it will lose its true flavour and spirit. It savours so much of my own temper, that I would have it encouraged by a due proportion of warmth; and, in similitude, I am bold to say, it will prove very good upon trial. In the great inquietude of my soul, give me leave to return to the only subject I can think of. Recommend me to the sprightly boy William, who, I cannot forget, promised me his guardian care as a Cupid over the heart which he only can warm. Thou little God, dispose her as a reward to thy truest servant! Were the degrees of my affection less engaged, I should be less troublesome; but do, dear Madam, indulge me in common with my friends to complain, and favour me with your wishes; Heaven will reward you for it. Oh, I could dwell upon this subject eternally; but the

the different passions of love and despair torture me to madness! We are told that afflictions are sometimes sent from Heaven to direct us in our way thither; I wish I could bear them more calmly. Sighs and languishments are my allotment; but, I thank Heaven, I have religion enough to adore the hand from whence they are sent. Methinks I am interrupted by your sudden appearance in the room, where an easy, good-natured, affable sweetness, stands gracefully recommended. Allow me, Madam, most thankfully to own the civilities of your house, which I most heartily wish I could be so happy as to return, at London, Holland-house, or any other air that she could like. Sure, I could live for ever any where with her, but no where without her; but, living or dying, I shall be always, in the deepest sense of obligation,

Dear Madam,

Your most truly obliged,

affectionate cousin,

and most obedient humble servant,

ESSEX Mck MEYRICKE.

Every happiness attend your little family. My service waits on dear, dear Mrs. Bevan. If there was another pen to be had, I would endeavour to send you a fairer impression of my mind, always bad, but never, never worse than this, which you have goodness enough to excuse. You may, in some measure, read the disorder of my mind in the hurry of my hand.

509.

509. TO E. S.*

[1731.]

ARTLESS believe my vows, my dear;
Believe the heart you 've won, sincere;
My dearest life, more generous prove;
Be kind, and crown my constant love:
Let Emma's story be reviv'd in thee,
And what she was to Henry, be to me;
Then Henry's constancy shall yield to mine,
And Emma's fame shall be eclips'd by thine.
From J—— P—— †.

* Elizabeth Steele.

† "James Philips, of Penty-park, esq. in the county of Pembroke, to whom Mrs. E. Steele, daughter to the late Sir R. Steele, for whom a duel was lately fought at the Bath," is said to have been married at that place, May 26, 1731, "Gent. Mag." vol. I. p. 222; and in the "Political State" for that year. In the latter of these works she is said to have had "a fortune of 10,000*l.*" That this intelligence was of the same complection with that mentioned in p. 659, of her marrying Mr. Harcourt, will appear by the following article: "Tuesday morning, John Trevor, esq. youngest son of the late Lord Trevor, was married to Miss Steele, daughter of the late Sir Richard Steele, knt. a young lady of fine accomplishments, and very considerable fortune." The Universal Spectator, June 3, 1732.—The degree of consanguinity between Mr. Trevor and the Marlborough family will appear by the following extract from the same paper: "On Tuesday the Right Hon. the Earl of Sunderland was married to Miss Trevor, the only daughter of the Right Hon. the Lord Trevor, an agreeable young lady of 20,000*l.* fortune. The ceremony was performed at the Lord Trevor's seat at East Barnet." Ibid. May 27, 1732.—The duel was between Mr. Philips and Mr. Harcourt; but I find no particulars of it in print.—"Two fools," Lady Trevor has been often heard to say, "fought a battle for me at Lansdown; for which reason I would marry neither

510. TO MRS. TREVOR.

DEAR MRS. TREVOR, MAY 10, 1733.

I HAVE ordered a bill to be sent you down for forty pounds, drawn upon the same persons as the last, payable at six days' sight; if you want it sooner, it will be paid you. The best way will be to hire from Bath. A coach and four will be sufficient as the roads are now, and the journeys every day short. I hope dear —— continues mending.

Let me know if you set out for Blenheim.

Yours affectionately, J. TREVOR.

I beg my respects to Mrs. Rachell, Mrs. Corbett, and Mrs. Aynston *.

neither of them." By the way, a mistake may here be corrected in Collins's Peerage, where Mr. Trevor's marriage is said to have been "May 31, 1731;" instead of "May 30, 1732."

* Soon after Steele's marriage with Miss Scurlock, he desired, if she was not engaged, she would accompany him on a visit he intended making in the afternoon. The carriage was ordered; and, without acquainting his wife to whom the visit was designed, they drove to a boarding-school in the environs of London, where they alighted; and presently a young lady made her appearance, to whom Steele shewed the greatest fondness, insomuch that his wife asked him, "if the child was his?" On his acknowledging that she was; "Then," said the Lady, "I beg she may be mine too." She was accordingly taken home, and treated as their own; but, by the order of the mistress of the family, she was called Miss OUSLEY. In process of time she became the companion of their eldest daughter, Miss Elizabeth Steele; who, piqued at the attention paid by her father and mother to Miss Ousley, could not help shewing it now and then in her behaviour to her companion; which was the reason she afterward gave for marrying Mr. Aynston, a worthy, respectable man,

511. MRS. AYNSTON TO MISS TONSON *,

WHO HAD BEEN ABSENT FROM HOME.

WELCOME, dear Nymph, thrice welcome to your home,
Your tender brothers joy to see you come;
They joy to see your charms by health renew'd;
Which sprightly charms, no doubt, have hearts subdued:
But, if you 've brought them back your own dear heart,
Unhurt, and unsubdued by Cupid's dart,
Let them sigh on, nor once regard their moan,
Till one produces merit like your own.

man, who lived on a little patrimony at Amely near Hereford, and was concerned in a glove-manufactory there. Though this marriage was with the approbation of Sir Richard, Mr. Aynston was not by any means a man whose education and situation in life was likely to be the choice of a young woman bred up as Miss Ousley had been; yet, in point of circumstances, much more so than if she had become the wife of Savage. Whether the reason assigned for marrying Mr. Aynston were real or imaginary, may be doubted; for Miss Steele never spoke of it without seeming to ridicule it, nor mentioned her husband without evident mark of dislike. To her sister she continued every possible token of friendship and tenderness after Sir Richard's death; and Mrs. Aynston constantly spent a few months with her every year. During one of these visits to her in London she unfortunately died almost suddenly. But her friend's regard ended not here; Mrs. Aynston left an only daughter, whom Lady Trevor had taken under her protection some time before the mother's death, and who continued the inseparable companion and intimate friend of her benefactress to the last moment of her Ladyship's life. See the Preface, to this Volume, p. ix.

* Afterwards the lady of Sir William Baker.

But that indeed's a sentence too severe;
For where can matchless merit find a peer?
Let him at least complain, till you can find
Good-sense, good-nature, and good-manners join'd.
When such a youth you meet, propitious be:
May such, and only such, be blest with thee!
Adieu, dear Nymph! May Heaven thy choice direct!
Believe my wishes flow from true respect.

512. LINES BY MRS. AYNSTON *,

ON RECEIVING AN INVITATION FROM A YOUNG LADY, TO VISIT HER IN THE COUNTRY.

ENJOY, dear Nymph, thy sweet retreat,
Nor think of one forlorn,
Whose pleasure yet was ne'er compleat;
She's not for pleasure born.

But, since you condescend to say
'Twill add to your delight,
I 'll wish the tedious hours away,
And long for Wednesday night;

* It does not appear either to or by whom the following short billet was written; but it characterizes Mrs. Aynston and some of her friends: "Sir, we returned your riddle by Mr. Symmons last night. We have all guessed at it. The witty Mrs. Aynston says it is a *fighting-cock;* the ingenious Mrs. Bevans calls it *a cock-fight;* the learned Mrs. Harris pronounces it *a bee;* but I, who have more sense than either of them, am very positive that it is *the gentleman-usher of the black rod.* They exult mightily in their great skill; but I do not doubt but that you are of the same mind with your INFAL."

When

When to that sweet retreat I'll fly
Gladly to meet my dear,
Her friendship undisturb'd enjoy,
And tell her all my care.

For she is home, and Kitty *, too,
Till Amely † I find;
Therefore, my dearest girl, adieu,
And bear me still in mind.

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513. Mr. NEWCOMB, in a Satire published in 1712, under the title of "Bibliotheca; a Poem, occasioned by the sight of a Modern Library," after describing the progress of OBLIVION in a manner to which the GODDESS OF THE DUNCIAD bears a more than accidental resemblance, thus animatedly adds,

"Still to proceed the Goddess try'd,
Till STEELE's immortal Works espy'd;
Trembling her dreaded Foe to view,
She sunk, and silently withdrew.
While SARUM's ‡ labours, round her spread,
Sustain and prop her drowsy head.
Hail, mighty Name! of all thy pen
Has dropt, to charm both gods and men,
Time nor Oblivion ne'er shall boast
One line or single period lost!
Improving Youth, and hoary Age,
Are better'd by thy matchless page;

* Mrs. Aynston's daughter, afterwards Mrs. Thomas. See p. 673.
† Near Hereford, Mrs. Aynston's place of residence.
‡ Bishop Burnet.

And, what no mortal could devise,
Women, by reading thee, grow wise;
Divines had taught, and husbands rav'd,
Now threaten'd, then as poorly crav'd,
But, spite of all, the stubborn dame
Remain'd our curse, and still the same;
Modish and flippant as before,
The smoothing paint and patch are wore;
Two hours each morning spent to dress,
And not one ounce of tea the less:
While the provoking idiot vows
Her lover fairer much than spouse.
The ladies, pleas'd with thee to dwell,
Aspire to write correct, and spell:
We scarce behold, though writ in haste,
Five letters in a score misplac'd;
Marshal'd in rank they all appear,
With no front vowels in the rear,
Nor any, out of shame or dread,
Skulking behind, that should have led;
In every line they now demur,
'Tis now no longer *Wurthee Surr*;
With half our usual sweat and pain,
We both unravel and explain,
Nor call-in foreign aid to find,
In mystic terms, the fair-one's mind.
Maintain, great Sage, thy deathless name,
Thou canst no wider stretch thy fame,
Till, gliding from her native skies,
Virtue once more delighted flies;
By each adoring Patriot own'd,
And boasts herself by thee enthron'd!"

514.

514. AN ESSAY,

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF SIR RICHARD STEELE *.

NATURE hath made it the condition of existence to live but for a time under any one mode; and when that period is expired, every thing changes, and gives way to a new succession. The finest movements of her workmanship must fall to pieces, when the hours assigned them are fulfilled; and the greatest master-piece of creation must be no more, when it has performed the uses for which alone it was created. Thus the brave and base, the learned and illiterate, the wise and foolish, are destined to an equal fate; and the most intelligent mind, however different in life, is the same in death with the most vacant soul, or vegetative being.

But Memory still preserves the fair idea of exalted worth, and faithful History conveys it down to very late posterity. It is then a grateful generous labour to consecrate the great man's fame, to raise him monuments of praise and glory; and, whilst the marble poorly shews he only lived and died, the nobler and more lasting work shall witness wherein mankind were better from his actions, or may be happier by his good example.

And now we come to pay the debt of justice; for we come to honour the manes of heroic worth: whilst weeping friends or sorrowful relations bewail

* Originally printed, immediately after his death, in "The British Journal, or the Censor, Sept. 13, 1729."

the

the lot of nature, and blame a very equitable fate; let us return a much more grateful tribute than tears, and express the acknowledgements his virtues deserved, whilst they bestow the sighs he does not want.

Sir RICHARD STEELE lies dead before us, and the great British CENSOR is no more! He is now gone to rest, whose active genius laboured so long for our welfare. Let our liberty and our happiness praise him. These we derived in an eminent degree from his illustrious endeavours; and his name is worthy of a lasting remembrance by all who love their country. But why do I say their country, since he, who lived a universal good, deserves the thanks of all mankind, and he who struggles for the liberties of men does a benefit to the whole species? Nothing can be a more common good, or a more diffusive blessing, than freedom, which is the great foundation-stone of happiness. It is therefore that we pay distinguished honours to our late departed friend, and pronounce Sir Richard Steele a benefactor to the human species.

This excellent man was born to a fortune much inferior to his merits: his early life was formed in camps, and seasoned to the toils of war; yet, greatly brave, and of unquestioned honour, his was a lettered genius, nor fond of military glory. He shone distinguished, even whilst in humble privacy; obscured not more by his low rank in life than by his native modesty. Here he was selected by the brave Lord Cutts *, whose discernment knew the noble

* See before, p. 77.

genius

genius even in the private soldier. That gallant man was his generous, disinterested patron; raised him to a better fate, and placed him in the light that he deserved. And this alone was a glorious virtue; all the services Sir Richard Steele did afterwards render to his country, all the honour and reputation he acquired by his actions or writings; all these were owing to Lord Cutts, who, when he raised a deserving man, did the world a benefit. Fair example to men of power, whose influence on the happiness of mankind is very great and important, if only considered in those whom they draw up after them. Here they have ample opportunities to bless the future generations, since, by judiciously discerning and promoting merit, however humble or obscure, they leave the most valuable legacies to the people and times which succeed them.

Such a legacy was Sir Richard Steele, who wanted nothing more to make him useful than to be known. He had great vivacity and ready address; was diffident of his own judgement, and yielding to other men: he had fine wit and true humour; a wit which was candid and good-natured: he was always willing to do good offices, and far from being envious of merit in other men. Hence he was loved and honoured by all men. None was more happy or extensive in his acquaintance: none was a more agreeable companion, or useful friend. This was his private life, and this might well recommend him to public esteem.

To him we owe that invaluable work which he commenced in "The Tatler," and, assisted by the immortal labours of his ingenious friend Mr. Addi-

son,

son, carried into numerous volumes *. Here he began a work which at once refined our language, and improved our morals. None ever attempted with more success to form the mind to virtue, or polish the manners of common life; none ever touched the passions in that pleasing, prevailing method, or so well inculcated the most useful and instructive lessons. I say, none did ever thus happily perform so important a work as these illustrious Colleagues, who, by adapting themselves to the pleasures, promoted the best virtues of human nature; insinuated themselves by all the arts of fine persuasion; employed the most delicate wit and humour in the cause of truth and good sense; nor gave offence to the most rigid devotees or loosest debauchees, but soon grew popular, though advocates of Virtue.

This was laying the axe to the root of Vice and Immorality. All the pulpit discourses of a year scarce produced half the good as flowed from the Spectator of a day †. They who were tired and lulled to sleep by a long and laboured harangue, or

* The very commendable and spirited writer of this sentimental Essay evidently includes, under the general name of TATLER, all the valuable periodical papers which STEELE began under this first title, and continued to publish for the entertainment and instruction of his countrymen, daily, or occasionally, for many years, under the diversified titles of "The Spectator," "The Guardian," "The Lover," "The Reader," "The Town-talk," "The Theatre," &c. &c.

† For instruction in common life, "nothing is so proper as frequent publication of short papers, which we read not as a study, but amusement. If the subject be slight, the treatise likewise is short. The busy may find time, and the idle may find patience." Dr. JOHNSON.

terrified

terrified at the appearance of large and weighty volumes, could chearfully attend to a single half-sheet, where they found the images of Virtue so lively and amiable, where Vice was so agreeably ridiculed that it grew painful to no man to part with his beloved follies; nor was he easy till he had practised those qualities which charmed so much in speculation. Thus good nature and good sense became habitual to their readers. Every morning they were instructed in some new principle of duty, which was endeared to them by the beauties of description, and thereby impressed on their minds in the most indelible characters.

Such a work as this, in a Roman age, would have been more glorious than a public triumph; statues would have been raised, and medals have been struck, in honour of the Authors. Antiquity had so high a sense of gratitude for the communication of knowledge, that they worshiped their lawgivers, and deified the fathers of science. How then must they have acknowledged services like these, where every man grew wiser and better by the fine instruction!

Yet we must not leave Sir Richard Steele on this point, nor rest his merits on the glory of a plan which was so well performed by him and his immortal Friend; which was never interlarded with scandal or faction, and which was a satire on vices, not men. No, we must conduct him to higher scenes than these—conduct him to his seat in Parliament, and describe his behaviour in the Councils of his Country.

He

He lived in the crisis of honesty, when, as Sir William Temple well expressed it, a brave man had a hard part to act, and it was dishonourable at Court to have truth and integrity. He lived when party rage and priestly pride ran high: when the Church was in danger, and the rabble were orthodox: when religious mobbings and factious incendiaries laboured to overthrow the Constitution, and prevailed against an Administration, great in their abilities and uncommon success; a Ministry the boast of our Nation, the glory of their own times, and the veneration of these. Nor did the Faction stop at this; they even shocked the Succession itself; and that illustrious Family now on our Throne had a doubtful prospect whilst we were so divided a people.

And here the worthy person to whom we pay deserved honours rose with noble courage in that dangerous conjuncture: he thought inactivity infamous whilst ALL was at stake; and his private interest was below his regard, when his Country's happiness became precarious: he did not, like little temporizing Patriots, stay till his place was taken from him; he bravely resigned it before he commenced his opposition; and his Letter to the then Lord Treasurer, since published to the world *, may shew how much he disdained any interest which might biass his judgement, or pervert his duty to the publick.

In this proceeding he acted worthy of himself; he spoke in Parliament, and appeared from the

* See it in p. 283.

press,

press, with a warm and generous freedom: he differed from those in authority, without libeling their persons. No scandalous parallels, no ungentleman-like invectives, or womanish railings, are to be found in his writings: he spoke to facts, and things of public concern; nor invented nor revived any little stories to blacken the reputation of others: in short, he was at war with no man's fortunes or places; and he greatly despised all lucrative considerations.

Add this to his character; he had an enthusiasm of honour, insomuch that he was always most ready to appear for the truth, when it was most difficult and dangerous: he thought himself obliged to stand in the breach, when no man else would; and his intrepidity was a public advantage.

Witness his memorable Address to the Clergy in defence of the Revolution *; I mean, his "Crisis," for which he was immortalized by the resentment of his enemies, and by the noble stand he made against them in his brave defence: for this he was expelled the House of Commons, whilst he triumphed in the judgement of his country; and raised such a spirit in the people by his writings, as greatly contributed to save our declining liberties, and establish the precarious Succession.

Such was his conduct, such his character, which was invariably honest; he flattered not his friends in their power, nor insulted his enemies in their distress: he opposed any measures which he could not approve, and exactly adhered to that excellent sentence, *fari quæ sentiat.*

* See p. 309.

This,

This, indeed, was his principle; and if ever man always acted inviolably by his opinion, or dared to preserve his integrity upon all occasions, Sir Richard Steele was the person.

And here we leave our common friend; here we drop the sacred pall on his last remains. It is not our business to shew his foibles, or expose the blemishes of an excellent man to whom we owe so much; those who loved him less will be fond of this: but we have pronounced his *elogium*, and honoured his virtues. Let his warm heart for liberty and virtue, his great benevolence, that never saw distress without compassion, or spared to lend his hand when he could give assistance *—let these engage our attention, and become our great example. Vice and Folly are always to be lamented; we heartily wish them out of the world, and can have no delight to lay them to the charge of our departed friends, whose actions should only survive them whilst they may influence posterity in the pursuits of Virtue.

* The Publisher of the Letters of Clio and Strephon, in a Dedication of the second edition of "The Platonic Lovers," addressed to Mrs. *Judith Bond*, says, "These Letters passed through the hands of many friends, and by that means copies of them were publicly seen, when the Writers had never seen one another, and so fell into the hands of a Gentleman, who published them, and inscribed them to a person of such worth, as I am proud to be able to call my Friend, Sir Richard Steele; whose commendations, joined with that of several other most ingenious persons, had first, I believe, made them so much and so favourably taken notice of."

515.

ANTICIPATION OF THE POSTHUMOUS CHARACTER OF SIR RICHARD STEELE *.

By the Rev. Dr. THOMAS RUNDLE †, afterwards Bishop of Derry.

"MADAM,

"THE hopes of seeing the King in town to-night so fills people's hearts at present, that it leaves no room for lesser pleasures; and therefore conversation is wholly taken up in that. But, though it may furnish out a visiting hour very comfortably, 'twill not spread half a page of a letter; and I want other materials to entertain you, while tea and idleness in a morning will allow my conversation admittance. 'Tis well for me, that I forgot in my last to say something to Mrs. Benson's strange request, of drawing up the character of Sir R. while he is alive; because, had I told her before of the unaccountableness of her desire, I had not had a single subject left me, to afford one sentence. I must beg you, therefore, in my name, to expostulate with her about the impropriety of the task assigned me. Should I begin,—before I could write half of it, 'tis ten to one but he would be quite

* For this excellent article, supposed to have been written about the year 1720, in a Letter to a Lady, I am indebted to the "Life of Bishop Hildesley," published in 1799 by my good friend the Rev. Weeden Butler; to whom it was communicated by Mrs. Cornewall, of Chart in Surrey, a lady nearly related to the celebrated Miss Catharine Talbot.

† "Rundle has a heart." Pope.

changed,

changed, and prove that all I have said of him was falsehood. To attempt describing a man so various, is like drawing the picture of a chameleon in his true colour; but, hang it! the more difficult, the more honour. It shall never be said that an impossibility hindered T. R. from complying with the petition of a friend; and therefore, Sir R. avaunt! for I resolve to paint all thy follies in lively colours; and expect, on Monday morning, when this letter is read, to have thy face glow with scarlet *.

"On the ——— day of ——— in the year ——— died Sir R. S.—(in decency we must suppose him dead, when we sum up his actions.) It is pity there is no person of abilities left, to give *his* character to the world, who drew so many, so finely! In a well-written life of him might be seen an epitome of mankind; and the motto of his first Tatlers was as true of his example as of his writings. Surely so many follies, and so much worth, were never blended together in any single person before. The last he resolved should be the guide of his behaviour, though he always followed the former.

"He was a coquette to Virtue; made continual advances, and seemed just yielding up himself to the comely dame who courted him, as she once did Hercules: when, on a sudden, he would flounce off, flirt back, and sink into the arms of Pleasure. His soul, in his calm morning-hours, was truly great; and some design for public good, the improvement of knowledge, and the security of *liberty* (which he always esteemed the *manhood of the*

* We are told, however, that Sir Richard, upon occasion, could make himself very merry and free with his own character.

mind),

mind), was formed in his thoughts, and was the delight of his meditations: and it must be owned that England is ungrateful, if she doth not confess, that the present happiness she enjoys was more guarded to her by *him*, than by any thousand other private men she can boast of. He had undaunted courage to oppose all mankind, for the sake of what was right; but still, his inborn imprudences generally rendered that courage feebly useful to the world; and his inability to withstand some evening's-merriment ruined half his attempts.

"But, notwithstanding the ridicule of such an allay in his patriot-ambition, he went on, like others, through good and ill report; and suffered himself to be laughed at and railed at, with all the indolence and insensibility of a Stoick.

"No bribes of riches or greatness could have tempted him to do a base action; though the necessities into which his carelessness in the management of his fortune, and a thoughtless generosity, had thrown him, often compelled him to submit to basenesses, almost as low as those by which others raise estates, and become glorious in villainy. Yet, while he did it, he scorned and hated himself; and resolved to be rich, that he might be honest. But still, the want of money returned, and with it all the mean shifts to extricate himself from the fatigue of lying to his creditors.

Thus he went on, in a continual round of self-dislike, and doing actions which produced new self-dislike: But he had this to say for his worst conduct, that his vices were always rencounters, and never meditated wickedness.

"He

"He was a pleasant companion, a generous enemy, and a zealous friend. His company was courted by every body, as more entertaining than a comedy: he never refused to forgive, and then forget, the injuries that had been done him by those who desired they should be forgiven; and all his fortune was at the command of his friends, as well as his labour and reputation. He seemed to want gold only to give it away: his busy mind pursued project after project, in hopes to be rich; that by it he might be more eminently serviceable to his friends, and his country. He embraced every appearance that flattered this public-spirited avarice, though the proposal were ever so wanton and improbable. In hopes of getting immense wealth, he ran after every whim, and so first aimed at the Philosopher's Stone; and when that would not do, he could condescend to be thought the author of the humble discovery of a new-fashioned hoop-petticoat: but still, 'twas with the sacred view of serving his country by his riches.

"This briskness and quicksightedness, to find out mines of treasure in a *notion*, made him enquire out great numbers of men of abilities, who were obscured by poverty; and animated them to exert their inventive talents, by high promises. When any of them had contrived a handsome scheme, he would, in the hurry of his approbation, expend his whole cash to promote it: and at last, when the project was almost ready to repay with interest his trouble and charges, the hopes would be blasted, for want of another ten pounds to complete the undertaking. Thus he rid hard, continually coursing after

after treasure; and, when his dog bore at the game, by a nimble unexpected turn, it always escaped from its mouth, and he returned empty: however, he comforted himself that he had brave sport, and went out again the next day, fresh and eager to the field. Thus, constantly, with high hopes and self-complacency, he renewed his project, as warm in expectation of success, as if he had met with no disappointment. He was often within a day of being the richest, and therefore the honestest man in England; but, before that ill-natured to-morrow came, he died! much lamented by all who value wit and good sense; and he must be owned to be, if not virtuous, yet a lover of virtue.

"His writings will make him beloved by all, in ages to come, when his follies are forgot, or softened by time. To him we owe not only his own performances, but those of others likewise; and he was properly the man-midwife to all the children of the Muses born in his own time, and was suspected very often to be their father also.

"He would have been what he was, had Addison never been born; but Addison would have died with narrow fame, had he never had a friendship with Sir R. whose compositions have done eminent service to mankind. To him we owe, that swearing is unfashionable, and that a regard to religion is become a part of good-breeding.

"He had learning; but it was seldom transfused into his performances. He studied Nature more than books; and as Numa consulted with Egeria, and learnt his laws from that divine nymph, Sir R. was in love with a more real goddess; and was

taught by her, in reality, all his precepts. He had an art to make people hate their follies, without hating themselves for having them; and he shewed gentlemen a way of becoming virtuous with a good grace.

"A bold free spirit, a lively humour, a quickness of thought, and the most delicate touches of the passions, inspire pleasure into all that read and understand his writings. He had not leisure and coolness enough to bear the fatigue of being correct: his observations on mankind crowded so fast upon him, that, for want of patience to write them down in a due, studied, natural order, he sometimes became obscure. His satire was severe and pointed; but, I think, he never once exerted that talent against his private, but always against his Country's, enemies; and therefore shewed good-nature, even in his sharpest and bitterest invectives.

"He had no genius for rhime *; and he knew that he had not, and therefore but seldom attempted it. Those who love S. will only admire Addison: he will never have many applauders; but those who can relish him, will never think any writings equal to those he has left us.

"How good his political judgment was, may be learnt from his letters to Sir Miles Wharton †, and to the Bailiff of Stockbridge ‡: how generous his

* ——— *Mediocribus esse poetis,*
Non Dii, non homines, non concessere columnæ.
Bickerstaffe, sapis, quondam lepidissimus exis,
Et scripsisse olim te bene nemo negat.
Pessima nunc tandem spargis tua scripta per orbem;
Bickerstaffe, sapis, non mediocris eris.
Lusus Westmonast.

† See p. 260. ‡ See p. 295.

sentiments

sentiments of religion, may be seen in his Epistle to the Pope. The justness of his wit, and his exact knowledge of true character, every body confessed, by their approbation of his Plays and Tatlers.

"Let thy faults, O Sir R. be buried in thy grave, and thy virtues be imitated by all! Let thy writings be beloved; for whoever doth that sincerely, will, before he thinks of it, become a lover, if not a practiser, of virtue; and the world may owe to thee the removal of fopperies, that are to be born again in centuries to come. Thy works will be a medicine of the mind, and cure all the green-sicknessed appetites that will seize on the gay and the young, without so friendly a cordial. If all who have been, or shall be, benefited by thy advice, will own themselves thy admirers, never could author boast a more universal or a better-founded applause; and Socrates himself shall have fewer disciples than Steele. T. RUNDLE."

*** *The following Articles should properly have been inserted according to their respective Dates.*

516. TO MR. M. DAVIES.

SIR, FEB. 14, 1716-17.

I HAVE yours of the 9th instant, but am wholly unacquainted with the point on which you and my wife differ in your accounts. If I knew that, I should be more able to advise her. I dare say she

is as averse to contests as you can be, but I can make no further answer till I hear from her. I am extremely concerned that there is any occasion of dispute; for I was always very much disposed to continue, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

I have writ to my wife, and I believe you will hear from her.

517. TO LADY STEELE.

MADAM, [1717].

IF I have a tender regard for every one that lives under my roof, so as to be uneasy if they want for any convenience; much more am I concerned for the ease of my wife and children. I desire therefore, that, for the future, I may be well assured that there is enough with thankfulness; and my expence shall be hereafter much more confined within my own walls. I am coming home.

RICH. STEELE.

518. TO LADY STEELE.

DEAR PRUE, [1718.]

I WRITE this in very great haste, being just come out of the country, where I lay last night with

with some friends, at a place called Carshalton in Surrey.

I am very sorry for neglecting a post, and hastened now to town to prevent the like accident.

I am, dear creature,

Ever thine, RICH. STEELE.

My Lord Cadogan * has sent hither this evening; he is labouring to do me good at Court. I shall know more in the morning.

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519. TO MR. ALEXANDER SCURLOCK.

COUSIN SANDY, MAY 26, 1720.

I HAVE yours with the accompt, upon which you refer me to the last which I have found among my papers. You will find the charge in the accompt ending Michaelmas, concerning collecting and reurns, is for 313*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.*

But I have not time to observe upon this matter carefully, so as to avoid errors; but my care is about the 100*l.* bond to the King. Till that is over, I know not how to rest easy, but shall take a journey down to Wales to take it up rather than let it lie out, so much do I dread being accomptant to the crown.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

RICH. STEELE.

* This Nobleman (of whom see p. 304.) was not created a Peer till May 18, 1718; so that this is one of the latest Letters written by Sir Richard Steele to his Wife.

520. PROPOSAL TO SIR RICHARD STEELE, FOR THE PAYMENT OF HIS DEBTS; APRIL 23, 1724.

	£.	s.	d.
Debts in all are — —	4052	0	0
Debts which he may take his own time for — —	800	0	0
Debts to be in a course of payment are	3252	0	0
In hand, to apply to them, is	400	0	0
Remains	2852	0	0
Household goods are —	100	0	0
Remains	2752	0	0
Woolley's debt, already agreed to be paid at the rate of 200*l.* a-year out of the Playhouse, is —	700	0	0
Remains	2052	0	0
Remaining annual income of the Playhouse, after the said deduction of 200*l.* a-year, is 500*l.*; which in four years will produce 2000*l.*			
To answer — —	2052	0	0
In the mean time, in security for the payment of the said debts, there is Playhouse stock —	1200	0	0
Three years' income after Sir Richard's death — —	2100	0	0
In all	3300	0	0

I propose,

I propose, That the income of the Playhouse be put into a Trustee's hands for the payment of the debts as above, under the security above mentioned.

That Mr. Plaxton be appointed Paymaster, to receive the money from the Playhouse, and pay it to the creditors; and that David Scurlock be appointed Trustee, to inspect accounts of the Playhouse, and to see that all money thence arising to Sir Richard be only applied to the said payment.

Mem. That these debts may be sooner paid, by the demand which Sir Richard has in equity upon the Managers, upon account of the clandestine alienation of 30*l.* a-week to their own use, contrary to his right of a full fourth share of all the clear profits.

And likewise that the said debts may be sooner paid by the accidental advantages of a new Play, which Sir Richard may produce next Winter.

Besides that I may have rated the annual income of the Playhouse at less than its real value (in calling it 700*l. per annum)* if all Sir Richard's just income is duly paid him hereafter.

Persons to be paid 400*l.* which is in hand:

Keen — — —	55	0	0
Dawson — —	100	0	0
Brewer — —	20	0	0
Servants — —	60	0	0
Aynston — —	100	0	0
Landlord — —	30	0	0
	365	0	0
Remains — —	35	0	0
	400	0	0

Brought over — —	35	0	0
Household goods — —	120	0	0
	155	0	0
Dawson more — —	100	0	0
Remains in hand — —	55	0	0
Gilpin paid — —	10	10	0
Remains — —	44	10	0

The deed for sale of the patent to Minshull for 4000*l.* is dated Jan. 31, 1715-16.

Edward Minshull set over the said patent and shares for 4000*l.* to Charles Gerey on the 24th of July 1716.

Charles Gerey set over by deed, on the 4th of April 1721, the said patent and shares to William Woolley for 1947*l.*

The said Gerey becoming bankrupt, Woolley and his assignees agreed with Sir Richard Steele to disengage him from all mortgages of the said premises to Gerey and Minshull, upon payment of 1200*l.* in manner following; *viz.* 300*l.* upon delivery of the deed of mortgage, and 200*l.* yearly out of the profits of the Playhouse, till the whole 1200*l.* be discharged. The 200*l.* to be paid on the 23d of January every year; and, as a security, Sir Richard Steele was to make an assignment of his interest in the stock.—Here is a receipt of Woolley for 500*l.* without date; but writ since Midsummer 1723.

FINIS.

JOHN NICHOLS and SON, Printers,
Red Lion Passage, Fleet Street, London.